



## PHD

### **The effect of socio-economic factors on educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait**

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**The Effect of Socio-Economic Factors on  
Educational Achievement in  
Intermediate Schools in Kuwait**

**Submitted by Ali Jasem Al-Shehab  
for the degree of Ph.D.  
University of Bath  
1996**

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## **Detication**

To my deceased mother Allah bless her, soul for her sacrifice,  
care and love.

My gratitude also goes to my wife for her patience,  
encouragement and advice.

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## ABSTRACT

While the role of socio-economic factors on educational achievement in school has been an important area of research in different parts of the world, it has received little attention in Kuwait. The researcher noticed from his experience as a teacher in Kuwait and from his visits to male and female intermediate schools in Kuwait that pupils coming from different socio-economic background tended to have different levels of educational achievement. In spite of the importance of studying the effect of socio-economic factors on educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait in more depth, there are no previous studies in this field. The aims of this study are as follows: first, to find out if there is a relationship between the pupils' socio-economic factors ( occupational level of father, occupational level of mother, educational level of father, educational level of mother, family size, and family income) and their educational achievement in Kuwait intermediate schools. Second, to investigate the major socio-economic factors that influence the educational achievement of intermediate pupils in the state of Kuwait. Third, to investigate the circumstances and lifestyle of the parents and the students of different achievements and qualities in more depth. Fourth, to find out if there is a relationship between educational achievement and inter-school 'differences in the governorates. Fifth, to investigate the circumstances and the opinions of teachers and social specialists in intermediate school about the students' educational achievement. Sixth, to make conclusions and recommendations concerning the ways of improving the educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

The main population in the research was a sample of 601 pupils (297 male and 304 female) in the third year of intermediate schools, their parents, their teachers and their social specialists. The researcher decided to use more than one tool to help him to obtain more in depth information about the effects of socio-economic factors on educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait. So he used the following instruments: 1. pupil questionnaires were based on information collected from the pupils' school record, this procedures was followed to obtain accurate information; 2. interviews were undertaken by the researcher in the homes and schools. These interviews were conducted with a sample of: a. twenty parents and twenty of their children( ten from high achievement (one male and one female from each governorate), and ten from low achievement (one male and one female from each governorate)). b. ten teachers (one male and one female from each governorate). c. ten social specialists (one male and one female from each governorate); 3. The researcher also chose four individual case studies (two students from high educational achievement level who had a different quality of home, and two from low educational achievement levels who also had a different quality of home).

After analyzing the findings, several conclusions were drawn. First, by using means, standard deviation and ANOVA test, significant differences with regard to the occupational level of father, educational level of father, educational level of mother, family size, family income but not the occupational level of mother were found among the students in terms of their mean achievement in intermediate schools. Second, by using means, standard deviation and ANOVA test no significant

difference was found between educational achievement and inter- school differences in Kuwait. Third, by using The Multiple Regression Test and using Step Wise, we found that the education level of father was correlated strongly with occupational level of father. In other words, these factors may be considered as two faces of the same coin, and where they correlated strongly with the final grades. Fourth, interviews with high and low achieving groups of both parents and children showed that there were a large number of differences of general factors between them. These factors come under the main headings of: degree of stability in family life, direction and autonomy in family relations, self concept/ worth, parental help, rewards and punishments from the family, the role of parents' expectations and aspirations, the role of peers, homework, siblings' achievement, family-school relationship, role of parent models and time spent with children.

From the discussion of the main factors it was found that the level of family stability was considered the most important factor and is therefore, the first main factor of interest. The other factors as mentioned above come under the umbrella of the second main factor which was parents' involvement and interest in education. The factor of time spent together is considered the third main factor of importance. So these three factors form a triangle showing that the Kuwaiti family has a clear influence on the children's achievement. Also, the interviews showed that the factor of the fathers' educational cultural level has an effect on the previously named factors, namely, stability, involvement and time spent. This factor acts with the other main factors in creating a positive environment for children to reach high achievement. Fifth, the interviews with teachers and social specialists indicated the ongoing difficulties in communicating with low achievers' parents. Sixth, the case studies confirmed the effect of educational- cultural factor of the triangle of factors in affecting the home environment and thus in affecting the children's behaviour and achievement.

It is clear from the case studies that even if a high educational- cultural level of the family does not exist; the existence of these 'triangle factors' only may lead to interactions inside the family which are translated as positive behaviours and styles and which motivate the children to get high achievement. On the other hand, the existence of the high educational- cultural factor of the family with the existence of weak 'triangle factors' will lead to interactions that weaken the role of the high educational- cultural factor in affecting the family life and children's achievement.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Kuwait is nowadays considered to be one of the developed countries but it is also one of the Arabic and Gulf societies. This society has been exposed to a great many changes social, economic and cultural all of which accompany development. The fast changes have extended to every sector of life and have reached all people, groups, traditions and behavioral styles. As the family is considered to be one of the main components of society it is also influenced by change (The Ministry of Education 1988). A number of challenges have resulted from the development of Kuwait and these challenges have created the need to review and consider the nature of the responsibilities that Kuwaiti citizens assume. Furthermore, these changes require rethinking about the factors necessary for preparing the citizens to face these challenges in order to satisfy the aims of socio- economic development.

Social scientists argue that societies belonging to The Third World are submitted to a pattern of social change in the development process. This pattern follows three stages: first, the traditional society, second, the transferring society, third, the industrial society ( Abdulbaset 1975). However, Kuwait did not pass through all the traditional development phases that most developed and developing countries passed through. Kuwait's entry into a level of high development was unexpectedly fast, allowing it to reach in a short time the high consumption stage at which all consumer and luxury goods are available for all citizens. At this level consumer luxuries and a high level of educational, health and services exists for the citizens. However, although Kuwait accelerated into the advanced stages of development, it still had to suffer from socio-economic phenomena that are considered part of the developing stages.

In spite of the huge educational efforts made through the availability of large budgets for building schools or establishing programmes for illiteracy eradication, recent studies have confirmed the increase of illiteracy in its population and the general appearance of low achievement of students for all stages (The Ministry of Education 1989). Al Ebraheem (1992 p2) indicated that from daily observation it is found that there is a crisis about educational achievement in spite of the huge efforts given to preparing teachers, building schools and preparing improved curricula. The intermediate educational stage in Kuwait is an important stage for many reasons. Firstly, it is a connecting link between the elementary stage and the secondary stage; secondly, in this stage the student transfers from childhood to adolescence; thirdly, it is the last compulsory stage which transfers the student to work or to complete academic education.

Abuo Allam ( 1980 p 49) indicated in his study that "working in this field ( education) indicated that the low achieving problem is a big problem and that it is spreading more in the intermediate stage in which every class suffers from this problem." He added that the average number of low achievers in this stage ranges from 10% to 25% in every school in Kuwait. He argued that the thing that may increase the low achievement problem is the low achievers' feelings of frustration which are expressed by them leaving the system, disturbing the teachers and going astray. As a result he recommended that attention should be given to this problem at all times socially and individually. Also, he recommended that The Ministry of Education should send researchers abroad to study low achievement in depth in order for Kuwait to benefit from other countries' experiences. Another study for Social Service Management (1988) indicated that low achievement in the intermediate stage most of the time leads to failure and drop-out which means that, first, there is a shortage in the human resources necessary to push for the development that the society needs. Thus, the repetition of low achievement of the students which leads to failure might delay the society in successfully reaching advanced development. Secondly, such failure means



that the economic resources of the society are wasted. Third, low achievement that leads to failure may lead students to leave school early and try to find a job at a young age before acquiring good preparation in school. This situation will negatively affect the society in which the students who are not prepared educationally and practically will not have an active role in fulfilling their society's ambitions. Another study by Al-Namer (1985) showed that the problem of low- achievement occupies the first position of the problems that the social specialists deal with. And, in intermediate schools in Kuwait 54% of the students face the problem of low achievement.

The researcher noticed from his experiences as a teacher for The Ministry of Education and from his visits to male and female intermediate schools in Kuwait that pupils coming from different socio-economic backgrounds tended to have different levels of educational achievement. It was also apparent that the majority of problems hampering education exist in the low income areas rather than in the other areas. For instance, there is the problem of illiteracy. Al-Khulaifi (1984) indicated that the percentage of illiterate parents is much higher in the low income areas than in the other areas. He added that the socio-economic changes in low income regions are not as marked in other regions.

The difference between the socio-economic changes in low income regions and those of other regions is considered an indicator of the importance of studying the family socio-economic situation. Sociologists agree that the family is one of the most important social systems in the society (Al-Hashimi 1971), and it is considered the base of all other social systems. Accordingly it is helpful to observe the strong relationship between the family and the society and the effect that change in one resulting from different circumstances may have on the other one. This measurement has become the means used to analyze social problems and socio-economic phenomena in society.

In addition, psychologists confirm that the family influences the child's personality. Accordingly, the family is one of the basic factors in the educational entity in that it affects the formulation of the future citizen's personality and helps them acquire the traditions that will remain close to them all their lives. In this way, the family is considered to be the first seed in forming the individual growth and is the first reference group for Arabic youth (Hejazi, 1978). Most of the time a child copies his parents in their traditions and behaviors (Al-Qurashi 1977). Thus the family is more organized and exerts more control than other educational factors. The family supplies psychological security and material care to children at the same time. Young people look at reality and deal with it according to family traditions, values and behavioural style. Thus, the child uses all his acquired abilities in solving his problems (Hejazi 1978).

In 1986, a study was carried out by the consultative system of Kuwait emir about the Young people and the Family. The study, which collected most of the youths' opinions about their problems with their families, indicated that young people think that the father does not show interest in family matters and that society suffers from the two problems of divorce and polygamy. These were considered to be the most important problems that may affect young people's futures. From the preceding it is clear how important the family is in general and in Kuwait in particular. Thus, it is necessary to study the socio-economic factors of the family in depth in order to ascertain the effects of these factors on the educational achievement of intermediate school students in Kuwait.

Asmail (1980 p 77) stated that: "in order to improve the Kuwaiti educational system scientific studies were required and these studies should be based on psychological research and applied using the latest technology in the field of education." He added, "Kuwaiti education should be defined and built to match Kuwait's culture, values, norms and aspirations." However, in spite of the importance of studying the effect of

socio-economic factors on educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait in, more detail, there are no previous studies in this field.

## **1.2 Importance and purpose of the study**

A number of Arabic studies have indicated the importance of studying the effect of socio-economic factors on students' educational achievement, for example, Badry (1978) in Egypt, Yakoub (1987) and Dawoud (1984) in Iraq, Umer (1985) in Sudan, Al-Rasheed (1987) in Kuwait, and Al-Shehab (1991) in Bahrain. However, none of these studies showed a clear interest in studying the socio-economic factors in depth so as to derive the key factors, that is those factors which may help to find the best solutions for the problem. Moreover, these studies did not give a clear picture of the nature of Arabic family life inside the home. A clear picture of the family may help in understanding the internal factors involved in educational achievement and such factors may help in finding the best solutions to the problems posed in this study.

Fraser (1959) enumerated the factors in the home environment which may operate to influence the educational achievement of the child. She distinguished four aspects of the home environment which were likely to influence this to a greater or lesser degree. These aspects of the environment were: cultural, material, motivational and emotional. More recently a study carried out by Kellagham et al (1993) indicated that what is important for pupils' development is not so much what parents are as what they do. So, studies in that field are required in Kuwaiti Society.

The purpose of the present study is to try to determine the effect of socio-economic factors and their influence on pupils' educational achievement in intermediate schools. More specifically, this study will firstly investigate if there are any differences in pupils' educational achievement at the intermediate level in relation to the occupational level of the father, the occupational level of the mother, the educational level of the father, the educational level of the mother, family income, and family size. This information will be analyzed to see whether any of these factors

contribute to the differences in educational achievement among the students.

Secondly, we will seek to determine the most significant factors that influence student educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait. Interviews and case studies will be used to investigate in depth the circumstances and life style of the parents and students in the home. Interviewing will also be used to investigate the circumstances and opinions of the teachers and social specialists in schools about the students' educational achievement. Finally, we will make conclusions and recommendations concerning the ways of improving the educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

It is hoped that by exploring the areas mentioned above we may help to identify the major shortcomings which exist in the family and intermediate school environments in Kuwait, and we will be able to pinpoint their negative aspects. It is also hoped that this information will influence other educators to develop, replace and introduce a system at the intermediate level that will help the pupils to achieve the highest standards possible, as well as to provide equality of educational opportunities for all the students in schools in the State of Kuwait. Furthermore, the outcome of this study should be of value to authorities, teachers, social specialists and parents as it could provide evidence of the causes of poor and different achievement, repetition and dropping out in intermediate education.

### **1.3 Terminology used in the Study:**

#### **1.3.1 Educational Achievement**

This is measured by the pupils' results in the third grade or final year of the intermediate school stage. These results include the total marks in the basic subjects: Arabic language, Islamic education, foreign language (English), Mathematics, Science and Social Sciences.

### **1.3.2 High and low achievers**

The researcher followed the classification of high or low achievers made by the Ministry of Education in Kuwait. The ministry's classification was based on the following results: high- between 600 and 561 marks; low-340 marks and below.

### **1.3.3 Pupils**

This refers normally to those in the third grade of the intermediate school. The term "pupil", "child", and "student" will be used interchangeably.

### **1.3.4 Educational ladder**

This means the system of education whereby stages of education are set up consecutively.

### **1.3.5 General Education**

General Education includes three stages (primary, intermediate, and secondary) preceded by the kindergarten stage. General Education prepares pupils for higher education.

### **1.3.6 Governorate**

Kuwait is composed of five governorates. These are the capital (Al Assema), Al-Farwaniya, Al-Ahmadi, Al-Jahra, and Hawali. These five regions in general represent the whole of Kuwaiti society in terms of most aspects of life.

### **1.3.7 Intermediate Schools**

This refers to government intermediate schools in the education system. This stage is largely restricted to children between the ages of 11 and 14.

## **1.4 The Research Questions**

The research questions are as follows:

1- Are there any differences in pupils' achievement at intermediate level in Kuwait in relation to :

\* occupational level of father?

- \* occupational level of mother?
- \* educational level of father?
- \* educational level of mother?
- \* family size?
- \* family income?

2- From the above, we ask which are the key variables affecting pupils' achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait? And how if at all do these key variables affect lifestyle?

3- What kind of lifestyle exists inside the pupils' families ? In particular:

- \* What is the relationship between the parents and their children? And how do they treat their children?
- \* What kind of atmosphere and environment do children live in at home?
- \* What kind of supervision do the parents pursue inside and outside the home?
- \* According to the parents, what kind of relationship exists between the family and the schools? and how, if at all do these factors explain the statistical correlation between SES factors and school achievement? Finally, from the above evidence what are the policy implications for the problem of low achievement in Kuwait intermediate schools?

4- How can schools treat the problem of low achieving students in intermediate schools in Kuwait?

5- What kind of methods do schools use in communication with parents?

6- With regard to "deviant" cases, how can the situation of a family of high socio-economic level having children of low achievement be explained, and conversely how can the situation of a family of low socio-economic level having children of high achievement be explained?

7- According to the parents, students, teachers and social specialists, what is the best way to reduce the number of low achieving pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait?

8- Although the study's focus is on the relationship between socio-economic factors and educational achievement it will be important to establish that there are not **strong school effects**. The data on educational achievement will be scrutinised on a school by school basis to determine the range of inter-school differences.

### **1.5 Methodology and Sample:**

To obtain data for this study a number of steps were taken. A pilot study was conducted in Kuwait to obtain more information about the topic. Interviews with headteachers, teachers, social specialists, parents and students were also carried out. In addition, four Kuwaiti Schools were visited ( two male and two female) in four different regions to observe the educational processes that teachers followed. Finally, pupils' files were examined to provide information about the background of pupils. The researcher decided to use more than one tool in the main study to help him obtain more in depth information about the effects of socio-economic factors in educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait. The main population in the research consisted of:

- 1- pupils in the third year of intermediate school.
- 2- the parents of pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait.
- 3- the teachers, and social specialists of intermediate schools in Kuwait.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT**

#### **2.1 The State Of Kuwait:**

The state of Kuwait occupies the north western corner of the Arabian Gulf. It is bounded in the east by the Arabian Gulf, in the north and the west by the Republic of Iraq. Its location makes it the vital opening to the Arabian Peninsula.

The total length of the borders is about 685 kilometers (426 miles). About 195 kilometers ( 121 miles) are the east sea border on the Gulf. The land frontiers measure 490 kilometers ( 304 miles), of which 250 kilometers ( 155 miles) form a border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the south and west, 240 kilometers border on the Republic of Iraq in the North and west ( 149 miles) ( Ministry of Planning, 1994).

Due to the location of Kuwait in the Sahara geographical region, the weather of the country is characterized by long, hot and dry summers with, short warm, and sometimes rainy winters. Dust storms almost always occur with a rise in humidity during the summer.

The Kuwait mainland, having no mountains or rivers or other natural features, was for a long time a transit area for nomadic tribes and caravans. Nowadays, the population is mainly Moslem but there are some non-Moslems among expatriates who live there. But in fact all citizens in Kuwait have the same language (Arabic) and traditions.

Kuwait first came to the attention of the great powers towards the end of the 19th century. In 1919 Britain established a protectorate over Kuwait. In 1961 The British Government announced that it recognized the full independence of the Sheikdom.



Almost two years later in 1963 Kuwait was admitted to the United Nations (Al-Khusosic, (1982).

In the last 15 years, Kuwait has witnessed a remarkable evolution covering different social, economic, cultural and scientific aspects. One of the most prominent areas of advancement has been the development of education at a rate unprecedented in any other country. ( Al- Aryan 1988). This was due to the fact that the policy of its planning bodies was to accelerate the pace of this development, because they found that the best financial investment was to educate the coming generations of citizens so that they would perform an active part in society. ( Al- Ahmed 1983).

## **2.2 Social change in Kuwait**

Kuwait as a society has undergone huge economic and social changes in a relatively short period of time. This section will attempt to describe these changes and their relevance to this thesis. The major problem faced by the researcher is that there are almost no studies of the process. Kuwait, unlike many Western societies, does not have a developed intelligentsia or a tradition of critical social analysis which is easily turned on its own society. As a consequence what follows will of necessity be rather sketchy, and not the sort of detailed analysis that one might expect to find if one was analysing a Western society.

The geography and environment of Kuwait's location has a role in the kinds of jobs available for people to choose. For a long time in the past, the majority of Kuwaiti people gained their livelihood from pearl diving. Some Kuwaitis worked in agriculture. Other people earned their living from pearls and the date trade between east Africa and south west Asia and the Arabian Gulf. Indeed, the geographical location of Kuwait played a major part in making the transfer of these goods easier. This fact is supported by Sorokin,

(1956) who noted the importance of the environment and the geographical location on economic activity, by saying that the natural factors like soil, weather and geographical location were the factors that determine the productivity and wealth of the society, especially in the early stages of the society's development.

Because of the nature of the old society and its economic situation Kuwaiti society could effectively be divided into two classes: a small upper class which included the pearl traders and property owners who had high and middle income, and a large lower class which included pearl-divers, shepherds and farmers who had low income.

In the old Kuwaiti society, the large extended family was common. Every family included the grandfather, grandmother, their sons, daughters and their grandchildren. This created a kind of integration in the family in which every member in the family complemented the other and felt part of a whole. One significant feature of the old family structure was that the family depended on the income of all family members. This made the family more cooperative which in turn led to the social integration between them (Al Romahi, 1984).

The old Kuwaiti society also had the basic structure of a system of education and government. The educational system of the old society was a modest system, which involved the teaching of the Koran and some basic reading principles. This educational system changed as society changed and developed. ( A detailed study of the history of education in Kuwait will be discussed in a separate point in this chapter). Regarding the system of authority and administration, this was all the responsibility of the Emir or 'judge'. He represented all authorities and he was the only decision maker. However, the position of the Emir in Kuwait was different from some other Arabian Gulf countries in that the Kuwaiti Emir at that time adopted a consultative style which was based on taking

into account the views of different people in different structures. This was facilitated by the appearance of the 'Emir' in public places or in one of the famous coffee shops. In other words the Emir made himself available for public audiences. He did this in order to give the citizens a chance to discuss decisions affecting the country with him (Al Jasem, 1973).

This situation remained unchanged until huge amounts of foreign capital and scientific and technological advances appeared in Kuwait as a result of the political connection between Kuwait and Britain in 1899. At that time the existence of foreign capital helped in the discovery of oil, which was to become the new economic resource in Kuwait, especially important after the deterioration of the pearl trade which had been one of the country's main economic resources. Indeed oil became the most important factor for economic growth. The power of oil eliminated the traditional economic bases in Kuwait and this led to a large revolution in Kuwaiti society in all its different sectors. As the oil companies started to appear, people began to work in these companies in order to increase their income and many people who used to work in pearl diving and simple trading left these jobs in order to work in the oil companies, which was easier for them. The owners of ships began to develop trading networks which were now very profitable due to the increase of consumers who now had higher incomes. The capital of the traders was often transferred from working in sea transport to internal investment. Thus new companies and banks grew up and these attracted a large number of immigrants from other Arabian and non Arabian countries who came to contribute to the new developing economy because of the huge financial resources and the small population in Kuwait. These immigrants work in all jobs, especially in labouring jobs which represent a large proportion of the work-force in the country (Al Jasem, 1980). Thus, the nature of the old economy changed to a more complex and diverse situation.

The functional changes which came with the economic changes in the country played a part in transferring the country from the old structure to a new structure. This change began to appear and improve gradually. The educational changes which came with the economic changes and which were represented by the opening of a large number of schools and specialized institutions helped this new functional structure to arise. Along with such economic and educational changes, different levels of jobs, -high, middle, and low- appeared.

The rapid economic changes in Kuwait which resulted from oil wealth produced also changes in the political and social construction in the country. During its economic development Kuwait was opened up to different political and cultural influences in the world. This has helped Kuwait benefit from the experiences of the developing countries. One major benefit has been the chance for people in Kuwait to benefit from democracy, especially since Kuwait has a small population and large financial resources. Al Shaik Abdoulla AlSalem, the previous Emir of Kuwait, changed the country's system to a democratic system to give the citizens more rights. He passed laws that would be appropriate to the citizens' aspirations. These laws benefitted all social classes and were appropriate with the new complications in modern Kuwaiti society. Thus there was a transfer from the traditional tribal judgment system in which the judge in the society was responsible for executive, legislative and judicial power, to a new country-wide system based on the separation of the three powers with a council of ministers as the executive, a People's Council as a legislator of laws, and a judicial system as a judiciary to administer the laws, all of which followed a style of a modern democracy. (Esmaeel, 1984).

A great many other developments have also taken place. In 1961 political life was transformed by modernising legislation. This legislation included the basis of the new social construction in Kuwait and the systems of the relationships between people and institutions. Included in the new laws were regulations to give all Kuwaiti citizens, from whatever social class, equal rights (Esmaeel, 1983). Thus it came to be that the laws and institutions of Kuwait were to benefit and serve all of its citizens. Thus, The Constitutional Stipulation introduced the People's Council to represent all classes in the country and to be the unique lawmaking institution in the country. Kuwaiti people still support the People's Council as it satisfies the equity issues for all citizens (Esmaeel, 1983). One of the People's Council mandates is to issue laws to ensure equality for all citizens. The constitution guaranteed employment for all citizens who applied for it regardless of their educational level. Thus all Kuwaiti citizens from different levels have the right to paid employment by the government (Shehab, 1964). An additional Act of the People's Council was to give all Kuwaiti people in different social classes advantages regarding their salary. They made local salaries higher than the foreign work- force's salary. This was in order to encourage and improve the social situation of the citizens.

Part of the People's Council's work was to ensure equality for all Kuwaitis. Thus the country was divided into five governorates named: Al-Assemah (the capital), Al-Farwaniya, Al-Ahmadi, Al-Jahra and Hawali. The purpose of this division was to find a kind of homogeneity between different sectors of Kuwaiti people in each governorate. Each governorate is divided into different areas and each area is then divided to two sections; the first section includes houses for low income classes and the second section includes houses for middle and higher classes. The new divisions sought to make health, education and social, cultural services equal between the governorates. Every area is served by a center which introduces health, educational, social and cultural services

equally and uniformly. Hence, this model of division creates a kind of social unity and social equality between all classes. Schools, health and cultural services that are introduced free to the citizens are the same in each governorate, and even the political representation in the People's Council for each governorate is equal so that the political parties are connected with social classes. As part of its modernisation programme Kuwait introduced a more equal education policy. The large number of schools in Kuwait and free education for all classes in the society played a big role in encouraging citizens to enroll their children in schools and as a result to work in the new jobs in the country in order to satisfy their new needs resulting from development (Basher 1987). In addition, a middle class appeared in Kuwait. This class did not exist in the old Kuwaiti society. It was a consequence of the social mobility of some lower class people, especially those who benefitted from the educational changes (Basher, 1987). Accordingly, we would anticipate that security in employment and amount of reward, and national origin are important factors determining individual mobility in Kuwaiti society.

The new legislation from the People's Council tried to evenly distribute the ministries throughout all governorates and not centralize them in just the capital governorate. This was to maintain a more homogenous distribution of citizens in all the governorates. Evidence suggests that all governorates contain a fairly even distribution of social services and classes (Ministry of Education, 1992). Al-Thaqib, (1974) has indicated that the concentration of uneducated classes might have slightly increased in areas outside the capital. As a result any study of Kuwaiti society needs to take into account all governorates, even if the general situation for these governorates do not have clear differences between them.

Furthermore, regarding the foreigners, who represent a large section of the population and who work in many jobs that resulted from the huge economic expansion and who represent two thirds of the work-force in the country (see Appendix H), the government constructed special areas for them in all Kuwait governorates. Also, although the government provides them with general health and cultural services, their situation in schooling is separate from the general system in the country, in other words, children of foreign workers go to separate schools.

Kuwaiti society is undergoing a transformation largely driven by rapid economic and industrial change. The pattern of change is for the most part the one recognised in the West. Structural changes that can be seen are firstly, that the Kuwaiti family has become smaller and it tends to take the form of the nuclear family (husband, wife and children) instead of the common larger family in the old society. This results from the increase of income, independence of work and variation of jobs. Also in the new Kuwaiti society the social relationships which were common in the old society have weakened, and this is because of the new occupations and increase in consumer desires or needs (Mahjoub,1986). In addition, the material aspect of society has changed. This is represented by changes in the building of houses, clothes, modern equipment, transportation and so on. Thus, Kuwait has become a modern country in its constructional planning.

The above mentioned changes occurred quickly in the educated and cultured classes of society as these classes mixed with other foreign cultures whether because foreign workers entered the country or because Kuwaitis had had external scholarships or external connections with other countries. However, these changes were not felt to the same degree in the lower and uneducated classes of society. This was because although

these lower classes easily accepted the material changes, such as new equipment, new clothes and new houses, they did not absorb the cultural changes easily. In other words they did not change in relation to behaviour, traditions and culture, and also they did not accept the new form of the nuclear family. This corresponds to what Ogburn, (1956) indicated in his theory about 'social lags', 'social lags' result from bigger and faster change in the material aspects in the society than changes in the cultural aspects. This lag happens in the lower and uneducated class of a society. Ogburn added that such benefits to people as, keeping power and keeping tradition may be a barrier to innovation and change. For this reason the social change process in Kuwait faced resistance from the lower and uneducated class to absorbing cultural values, although time and rapid development reduced this resistance. Education is one of the areas where we see social lags. For example, if we take the issue of woman's education, we can see that in Kuwait the high and cultured classes accepted the idea of educating girls whereas the uneducated classes resisted the idea of constructing schools for girls at first. That was because such schools went against their old traditions which did not allow girls to go outside and receive education. However, through time this resistance started to lessen, especially when the women became important members of the work- force and had their own income to contribute to the family. Nevertheless, although through time the view of women's education changed slightly, the low classes still do not fully encourage any of their children to be well educated (Al-Khulaifi, 1987). This may be because of the traditional view of this class which believes that the son should work and help his father, even if his father does not need this help, and that the basic role for the daughter is to marry and stay at home. Thus, the family do not need to encourage their children to get higher education. Family influences continue to be important in all levels of Kuwaiti society. The lives of parents and their children are inter-twined throughout their lives. For example, when a son marries he stays with his family and if the daughter does not marry



she also stays with her family. Hejazi (1978), mentioned that the family is considered to be the first seed in forming the individual growth and is the first reference group for Kuwaiti youth. He argued that this is due to the cultural nature of Islamic Arabic societies that give the family a big role in influencing the children in all vital matters concerning their lives. In conclusion, although Kuwait has modernised in many areas it still maintains some of its traditional values. The family as a support unit and major influence is a very significant factor in the life of every Kuwaiti.

One result of Kuwait's modern development has been that the possibility of polygamous marriages has actually increased. In the past although polygamy was accepted it was difficult because of lack of money. Nowadays, with Kuwait's attempt to help people achieve a better life-style there is more money available for the family. In lower educated families, this extra money is sometimes used to facilitate polygamous relationships. Some studies in Kuwaiti society have indicated that there is an important relationship between educational level, functional level and the economic level of the Kuwaiti family, and divorce and polygamy in the family. In other words, the higher the educational and functional economic level of the family the less divorce and polygamy and the opposite is also true (Hasean, 1978; Bastaky, 1973). Many studies have indicated that divorce and polygamy are considered to be part of the common shape of the low educational level families in society. The increase of polygamy and divorce leads to many direct and indirect negative effects on the construction process of the country.

The religion of Kuwait, Islam, is another important aspect of society. With respect to Islam, it is necessary to indicate that Islam has supported most changes in society. It has particularly supported the freedom of opinion, education for both sexes, economic development and the general improvement in the social situation of the citizens at all

levels, even if there is contradiction in some economic aspects like, some banking dealings (Al Romahi, 1984).

However, it is essential to mention that with regard to the people's general understanding of whether they, as Moslems, should accept the new Kuwait, there has been some confusion. The highly cultured and educated people are able to understand that there is no contradiction between what they believe in Islam and the changes happening in society, and consequently they can accept these changes. In contrast, the low cultural level of some people has been a negative factor in their understanding of how Islam views these changes. This creates barriers for those people and prevents them from understanding the role of Islam in the new society. These uneducated people think that clinging to traditions is what Islam seeks and they misunderstand some of Islam's rules. This then hampers their own improvement. For example, the role of education in life is misunderstood by these people. This is especially true with regard to women's education, which they do not understand at all because they think that the Islamic requirement of the veil prevents women from going outside and being educated. The low level of education of these people prevents them from seeing that, in fact, the Koran urges all people -men and women- to seek education (The Holy Koran). Another example of people's ignorance limiting their development is with regard to the question of marriage. Polygamy and divorce are both allowed in Islam in some cases and for specified reasons. But the low cultural level of uneducated people prevents them from understanding the reasons why a marriage should be extended to other partners or dissolved. Consequently, they misinterpret Islam and engage in both polygamy and divorce thinking that Islam urges them to do so. One reason for this misunderstanding may be due to the weakness of the role of the mosques and public information in the country (Al Saleh, 1983).

Education is another area of change in Kuwait. Although Kuwait depends not only on the Kuwaiti workforce, which represents one quarter of the workers, but is also dependent on its foreign workforce, which represents three quarters, the country is trying to find a suitable environment for all Kuwait's citizens to get a high level of education in order to serve Kuwait in the future. Kuwait considers these educational efforts an important investment because it has a small population and huge financial resources (Ministry of Education 1985).

Laws in Kuwait seek to give the same services and the same education for all Kuwaitis. But in spite of all these efforts as has been stated above, there is a great difference between upper and lower classes with regard to valuing education. The barriers to change from the low and uneducated class may represent one of the most important problems in Kuwaiti society which may hamper the development process. As a result of this, studies by the Ministry of Education and some researchers have indicated the importance of studying the social and cultural situation of the family and its effects on education in Kuwait so that the huge effort being made to promote a high level of achievement in education is rewarded with appropriate returns.

### **2.3 The History Of Education in Kuwait:**

Education in Kuwait began in the Mosques where Imams and religious men taught the principles and rules of Islam. In addition, they taught lessons which included explanations of some verses from the Quran, the biography of the prophet, stories of Islamic heroism and the Arabic language rules ( Ministry of Education 1985).

In the year 1887 semi- religious primitive institutions, ` Kuttabs`, were established and they introduced the teaching of reading, writing, and arithmetic in addition to learning

The Holy Quran. A 'Kuttab' was a small house where young boys used to meet to learn. Girls had their own 'Kuttab' and a female instructor. (Ministry of Education 1985).

The teachers of the boys were called 'Mullah' and the teachers of the girls were called 'Mollayah'. By 1910 Mullah schools had been opened in almost every quarter in Kuwait. Students answered unquestioningly to the Mullah, and physical punishment was the main way of keeping control (Al-Noorie 1942). All Mullahs had absolute authority in their Kuttab. Nobody, not even the government, had the right to interfere in their work (Sabbarini 1982). The educational process at that time was without government support, sponsorship or even control. Al-Abduljadir (1986) wrote: "There were no specially built classrooms, no organized class periods, no specialized teachers, no well-defined curricula and no organized school administration" p 8.

In 1912 a group of merchants founded the first proper school, the Al-Mubarakiyah school (El-Shimy, 1982). It was for boys aged nine or ten who had successfully completed education in a Mullah school. The school offered five years of study in religion, Arabic, Islamic studies, history, geography and mathematics but there was no set curriculum. Students also studied simple book-keeping and accountancy so that if and when they were involved in commerce, which always meant travelling abroad, they were able to record their dealing. (It is worth noting that the selling of pearls to other Gulf countries and India was an important export for Kuwait at this time (Al-Qanaee 1968)). The curriculum was unplanned and was heavily dependent on the memorization and interpretation of the religious texts (Al-Abduljadir 1986).

The Al-Mubarakiyah school was the first and only one of its type in Kuwait up until 1921 when another school, Al-Ahmadiya was opened to cater for the growing number of

students wanting education and who were unable to attend Al-Mubarakiyah because that school was overcrowded. The curriculum in the new school was the same as in Al-Mubarakiyah but the teaching of English language was now included ( Al-Noorie, 1942), and in 1937 the first girls school was founded, offering Arabic, home economics and Quranic studies (Shehab, 1984).

By the early 1930's, the artificial pearl industry started to affect Kuwait's trade in real pearls. The result of such competition meant a great drop in Kuwaiti pearl exports, and the merchants found it impossible to continue funding the two Kuwaiti schools ( Department of Education 1960). But during the thirties, oil was discovered and with its economic and technical activity, a new system of education began to develop through what is now called the Government Department of Education ( Shehab 1984).

In 1936, education become the responsibility of the state when the Council of Education and the Department of Education were established. One of the first tasks of the Council of Education was to modernize the education system in Kuwait. For this purpose teachers were brought in from different parts of the world, because there were not enough teachers in Kuwait at that time (Al Shtiany, 1982). The first group to arrive in Kuwait consisted of four teachers from Palestine, at that time under British mandate ( Middle East Services 1979).

Iraqi syllabuses had been taught before the arrival of the first Palestinian in Kuwait. Later on Palestinian syllabuses were introduced. Special Syllabuses were introduced for girls, including needle-work, nursing, general health, manual work and sewing ( Abdul-Gafour 1978).

In 1947, an institute for religious education was established, and another for commercial studies came into being in 1950. In 1954, an industrial college was founded to meet the demands of the country for professionals and technicians. Then in 1950/51 the Department of Education founded an institute to prepare teachers to meet the needs of schools. In 1954, an institute for female teachers was established; the enrolment was encouraging and the first group graduated in 1955/56 ( Abdul-Gafour, 1978).

The demands and growth of the educational system became so pressing that the Department of Education became the Ministry of Education, and to face this educational expansion the Ministry of Education increased the budget for education. In 1955, a team of educationalists was invited to undertake a more comprehensive examination of the existing system and suggest improvements. In 1956, because of their report the educational structure in Kuwait was changed to four classifications: Kindergarten, Primary level, Intermediate level, and Secondary level ( Kabbani and Akrawi 1955). Al Khayyat (1980 p.3) mentioned that " One of the first steps to formulate the basis of education aims in Kuwait was undertaken in 1955, that is before independence, when a team of educationalists was invited to look into the educational system in Kuwait". He added that " their recommendations were followed up, even after independence" ( Al Khayyat 1980 p.3).

In 1961, Kuwait became independent and joined the Arab league. The development of education increased as a result. Cultural relations were developed with other countries of the world, and Kuwait sought experience and support from many advanced countries, especially when it joined UNESCO in 1963.

## **2.4 Objectives and Aims of Education in Kuwait :**

The general educational objects in Kuwait are connected with the nature of Kuwaiti society, its philosophy and its future prospects, and with contemporary educational trends which are needed to cope with the changing nature of Kuwait. They are also connected with the needs of the educated class and their characteristics. The educational policy in Kuwait has been marked out in the following constitutional stipulation:

### **Article 13**

Education is a fundamental quest for the progress of society, assured and promoted by the state.

### **Article 40**

Education is a right for all Kuwaitis, guaranteed by the state in accordance with and within the limits of public policy and methods. Education in its preliminary stage shall be compulsory and free in accordance with law.

( Government of Kuwait 1962 P.7)

The government of Kuwait sets a high moral goal for its citizens. With regard to educational policy it sets out to create good citizens with what would be accepted as balanced personalities. The role of education is to develop them physically, mentally, spiritually, psychologically, and socially. In addition, understanding and practising the religion of Islam is essential. They ought to be well-disciplined, know moral and ethical values, and appreciate aesthetic feelings. The love for God, their country and their culture and tradition is developed in students. Health, hygiene and civic sense are also cultivated in them ( Hakim S. 1984).

In the light of all the above, the Ministry of Education general objectives in Kuwait emerged as follows:

- To believe in the principles of the Islamic Religion, where these principles become a way of thinking and style of life.
- To introduce the individuals to the history of Kuwaiti society and its development, and develop a feeling of patriotism to cherish their country, as well as the Arab and the Islamic world.
- To acquaint the individuals with the Islamic and Arabic heritage and support the social habits, customs and traditions in it.
- To develop the abilities of the individuals to think scientifically, creatively and innovatively.
- To prepare generations to take the responsibility to make the necessary changes and development, to raise the standard of society and support its progress and prosperity, and to face the challenges and dangers of this age.
- To pursue scientific progress and to benefit from modern technologies.
- To strengthen the cooperative and brotherly ties and the spirit of one family, and enhance democracy and the freedom of individuals and their cooperation with the group.
- To assure the relation between theory and practice, and between knowledge and work, and to balance spiritual and materialistic values.
- To help individuals acquire a complete and integrated development in spiritual, intellectual, and physical areas, to prepare them for a successful social family life and to help them solve their social and personal problems.
- To help the individuals practise continuous learning all their lives.
- To realize the positivity of individuals, and to develop their ability to educate themselves.
- To benefit from modern technologies in the field of teaching and learning.



## **2.5 The Educational Structure in Kuwait:**

In 1954 the authorities realized the necessity for a review of educational curricula and educational plans. By the scholastic year 1956/57, the educational stages were classified as follow: (see Figure 2.1)

- |    |                |         |                   |
|----|----------------|---------|-------------------|
| a. | Kindergarten : | 2 years | from age 4 to 6   |
| b. | Primary :      | 4 years | from age 7 to 10  |
| c. | Intermediate : | 4 years | from age 11 to 14 |
| d. | Secondary :    | 4 years | from age 15 to 18 |

The national system of education covers all fields of education at the primary and secondary stages. It also includes vocational, technical and adult education. It embraces all Kuwaiti students, and provides for the education of the physically and mentally handicapped ( Ministry of Education 1987).

Public Education is free for all Kuwaitis in all stages.

## **2.6 The Kindergarten Stage:**

The main aim of this period, as recognized by the Ministry of Education, is to provide a transitional period between the home and formal schooling (Ministry of Education 1992)

The kindergarten stage which is for 4 to 6 years ( 2 years duration) aims at :

- Developing the child's personality.
- Inculcating the good behaviour and habits that help the child to attain a successful future.
- Developing the child's mental and physical capabilities.
- Implanting self-reliance, freedom and self-identity.
- Enabling the child to acquire experience that are appropriate to the child's stage of development. (Ministry of Education 1992)

The Kindergarten curricula consist of educational experience to be introduced through a standardized educational programme over the whole scholastic year, with a duration of two weeks for each educational experience included in the curricula. The curriculum and the environment of the Kindergarten is planned to encourage the proper mental and physical development of pre-school children.( Al Ahmed 1987). The teaching programmes in Kindergarten include activities and experiences in the following areas: health, education, physical training, science, language, moral training, sports, in addition to music, art, and social activities ( Ministry of Education 1984). In 1954 there were only two Kindergartens ( Al Muhallab and Tariq Kindergartens) but later the number of Kindergartens grew to 120 schools in 1992/93 (see table 2.1).

## **2.7 The Primary Stage:**

The primary (elementary) stage starts at age 6 with four years duration. It is compulsory and aims at :

- Helping the students towards mental, spiritual, moral, social and physical development.
- Providing the pupils with information, skills and aptitudes.
- Implanting Patriotism, Arab Nationalism, and Islamic principles in the students.
- Adjusting to the surrounding environment.( Ministry of Education 1992).

This stage emphasizes the basic school subjects: introduction to social studies, reading and writing skills, national education ( at the 4th year). The study plan in this stage also includes free activities, music, lessons in art and physical education ( Ministry of Education 1984a). In most of its aspects the curriculum at the primary stage is an extension of the Kindergarten curriculum, but it tries to extend and deepen the children's

knowledge in order to prepare the students academically for the next stage (Ministry of Education, 1983a) (see Table 2.2).

There is no co-education at this level or at any other level, except in kindergarten.

However the Ministry of Education has adopted a new policy at the primary stage in terms of staffing this level with female teachers in both boys and girls schools. Boys and girls study the same textbooks and their curricula consist of roughly the same activities and subjects. The total number of students in this stage in 1992-1993 was 86,426 ( 42,844 boys and 43,582 girls students). The total number of teachers at this stage was 5,708 (2,162 male and 3,546 female) ( see Table 2.3).

## **2.8 The Intermediate Stage :**

The intermediate level consists of four years. It is considered an essential part of compulsory education, and is also of significance since it is a continuation of the psychological growth of the child and prepares the child for adolescence. This is the stage when the child is given more information to discover her/his abilities and talents, to recognize her/his capacities and to develop her/his inclinations which will guide their future choices and identify the scope of these capabilities.

The goals of this stage are:

- Helping the students to acquire the objectives, the skills, and the information related to Islam, the Universe and life.
- Helping the students to shoulder responsibility and self-acceptance.
- Building up the body and protecting it and inculcating hygienic habits.
- Understanding the Arab community and acquiring its cultures ( Ministry of Education 1992).

The study plan at this stage is aimed at fulfilling the learners' needs that correspond with the characteristics of the adolescence stage. It gives special attention to discovering their

capabilities, inclinations and aptitudes and directing and developing them to the utmost. It also deepens the knowledge, skills and aptitudes of the primary stage development to realize a better balance and harmony both materially and spiritually in the student's growth so that he/she can control her/his various instincts, especially arising from adolescence. Therefore, its programmes and scopes of activity deal with all these matters carefully and systematically. The curriculum includes new and more detailed knowledge; it also provides the pupil with enough Islamic and national culture to be aware of current issues, to master the Arabic language, to know about the history and geography of the Arabs and to know the bases on which the modern culture is built. It also gives the chance for the pupils to take part in social and cultural activities so as to discover their inclinations and talents and direct them to what is useful to them in their study at later stages ( see Table 2.4).

At the intermediate stage students are also required to take English as a second language. 88.9% of the Kuwaiti students, who were the appropriate age for this stage have joined the intermediate stage.( see Table 2.5).

## **2.9 The Secondary Stage :**

The duration of the secondary stage is four years (see Table 2.6). It is a significant stage since it has a great effect on the youth in preparing them for life.

There are two categories of secondary education: (a) General Academic (b) Credit System

The general secondary should comprise four years of schooling. It is open to the intermediate graduates only. General courses are taken in ninth and tenth grades by all students. After that they are required to choose between the humanities or scientific section ( Ministry of Education, 1986a).In both these sections, students are prepared for higher education. In the humanities section, the pupils take a specialized course in Arabic

literature, history, Islamic studies, geography, philosophy, English literature, and the French language. In the scientific section the students study mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry, Arabic language, Islamic studies, and also English (Ministry of Education, 1990) (see Table 2.7).

This stage prepares its students for a positive life based on a full realization of the value and role of science in life, as well as the appreciation of arts and literature and aesthetics. It develops the student's ability to form sound social relations and utilize leisure time, thus preparing them to be better citizens, at the earliest stage. In addition, it prepares them either for a practical job or to go on to a university education by ascertaining the students' capabilities and inclinations and by developing them in a way that helps them choose their future career or the kind of study that suits their personality and ability. It provides the experiences that develop the skills of scientific and creative thinking and self- education. It also enlightens them as to their rights and duties and informs them of the world's natural resources, including knowledge on how to protect, develop and utilize fully these resources.

The following are the major objectives of the secondary stage:

- To prepare the students to continue their education in universities and other higher education institutes and to meet the challenges of the world.
- To provide the knowledge, skills and attitudes relating to a sound understanding of the Islamic creed.
- To strengthen the potential for self-education.
- to develop the sense of belonging to Kuwait, the Arab nations and the world of Islam.

- To strengthen the ability of thinking in a sound, scientific way and the skill to take decisions in preparation for shouldering his/her role and responsibilities as a citizen.
- To strengthen the links of solidarity and "one family" spirit.( Ministry of Education 1991)

In 1979 the Ministry of Education introduced the credit system in secondary education.

At first, this was introduced in one school only but was quickly followed by a girls' school in 1979/80. The number has increased to 21 schools ( both boys and girls), in 1992/93 the number reached 30 schools

The unit credit system emphasizes the educational principles that are in harmony with the spirit of our changing and developing age. It is a system flexible enough to consider the demands of individual differences and which gives more freedom of choice in the selecting of units as well as routes and the freedom to change the route. It also develops the skills of self- education and adopts on-going assessment with variations. It offers the students educational and vocational guidance by exposing them to vocational programmes through which they discover their capabilities which guides their decision in selecting a suitable area (Ministry of Education, 1989). It also gives students the chance to learn about the vocational fields in the country and the available careers. Thus the unit credit system makes up for the essential drawbacks in the purely academic secondary school, with its one-dimensional concentration on preparation for university and higher studies, vocational chances, or knowing the labour-market and its potentialities ( Ministry of Education 1989).

## **2.10 Higher Education :**

In the field of higher education, Kuwait has developed immensely. Kuwait University was established in October, 1966. The Minister of Education, in his capacity as a Chancellor of the University council, along with the Rector are responsible for the administration of the University.

In its first academic year the University had 242 male students studying liberal arts, science and education, and 176 female students in women's colleges ( Ministry of Education 1992). By the Academic year 1989/90, the University had 13000 undergraduate students registered in over 55 different majors, together with 300 graduate students in 20 various disciplines, ( including the areas of science, engineering, medicine, philosophy and fine arts.) The student population was divided almost equally between males and females. The teaching staff included approximately 970 faculty members and 172 language instructors, as well as, 3475 personnel in various categories of support staff. The ratio of the Kuwaiti University workforce was approximately 25% of the total University workforce. The average annual cost for a student, based on both capital and operating expenditure, rose from the University's founding cost of \$ 11,000 per student to \$ 18,000 in 1990, ranging in between from \$ 6.000 top \$14.000 Medical students typically had the biggest share, followed by Engineering students, Science students and lastly Humanities and Social Science students. Budget figures are based originally on the Kuwaiti Dinnar, with a conversion rate of 1 K.D = US \$ 3.4. (Ministry of Education, 1992).

## **2.11 The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET):**

The second item Law No. 63 of 1980 established the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) to provide and develop a national labour force to face

the shortage in Kuwaiti of technical labour. Various strategies were approved for PAAET, the most important of which was to prepare Kuwaiti nationals to contribute to the building of their society. Represented by its colleges and various training centers PAAET attempts to achieve its goals by focusing on achieving a balance in training and qualification between men and women, and on providing various scientific and vocational instruction to meet the needs of Kuwait's job market. The following are the colleges, centers and programmes of the P.A.A.E.T:

- College of Basic Education
- College of Commercial Studies
- College of Technological Studies
- College of Health Sciences
- Center for Communication and Aviation
- Center for Industrial Training
- Center for Special programmes
- School of Parallel Education
- Programmes of In-Service Training
- Programmes of Community Service and Continuing Education

## **2.12 Adult Education & the Eradication of Illiteracy :**

The state of Kuwait, holding that illiteracy is one of the greatest obstacles preventing development efforts in all social, cultural and economic domains has been amongst the first to warn against the dangers of such a problem and its negative effects on society at large. In order to tackle this problem, the state of Kuwait, through the Ministry of Education, in 1958 started to carry programmes to eradicate illiteracy by opening two centers for the eradication of illiteracy for men. Very soon afterwards, these programmes



were extended to the female population with another two centers for women opened in 1963. In response to the number of students, the state expanded its campaign against illiteracy and as a result of which the numbers of men's and women's centers have doubled (Ministry of Education 1989).

These centers were helpful for many citizens such as:

a- Those students who cannot, for one reason or the other continue their study at the ordinary school. They join these centers, and a good percentage of them take various jobs at the same time, combining work and study.

b- Those students whose circumstances have compelled them to leave school and go for work without obtaining any certificate which may help them in the field of their jobs.

Such people try to regain what they have lost. They enrol themselves at the Adult Education Centers in order to get the educational certificates which open the way for promotion in their jobs or to improve their professional as well as financial situation.

### **2.13 Teacher Training: Qualification, and Preparation:**

In the past, Kuwait depended on foreign staff to provide most of its teachers. Therefore, to meet the needs of the state for native trained teachers the idea of establishing a teaching institute was considered to be very important. In 1953, the Teachers' Institute was established. The period of study was three years after the intermediate level of basic education. This was modified in 1969 and training became four years instead of three years. After four years of successful training, teachers were then eligible to teach in Kindergarten and primary classes (Ministry of Education 1963).

In 1972, two new institutes of teacher training were opened, one for males and another for females, and the old institutions were closed. The entry policy for the new institute was modified and the condition for attending this institute was the holding of a secondary

education certificate ( Ministry of Education 1983b). Later, as a result of social and cultural development, the Public Authority for Applied Education Training established in the 1980s a College of Basic Education in order to raise the standard of their students studying education and pedagogy. The period of study in the college was four years after the secondary level.

In Kuwait the preparation of teachers is of two types: pre-service training and in-service training. Kuwait University undertakes the pre-service preparation of teachers( male and female) for the intermediate and the secondary school. The teachers in the intermediate and secondary school have varied qualifications: they usually have a university or higher education degree. The general minimum level of education required for teachers is a BA from the University. The College of Basic Education ( male and female) prepares teachers for the primary school and kindergarten ( Ministry of Education N.D).

The methods of preparing teachers in Kuwait include the following:

- a. theoretical courses which are conducted by specialists from Kuwait University and other professors specializing in the educational field;
- b. practical courses which are based on practical experiments in laboratories, field visits, utilization of scientific equipment, practice of modern teaching methods etc. (Ministry of Education N.D ).

The in-service training programmes are for all teachers (old and new teachers) who are already in-service. These programmes include types and methods of evaluation, methods and techniques of teaching, ideas about the characteristics of children and their growth, and field problems encountered by new teachers ( Ministry of Education N.D.). One important aim for the in-service training programmes is to make the teachers aware of modern methods of teaching in terms of world education trends. It also aims to give the trainees information that they can transmit on the traditions and philosophy in Kuwaiti society.

#### **2.14 Administration and Finance of the Educational System :**

The school, the institute or the kindergarten are considered to be the primary productive units in the educational system or the nucleus around which the administrative structure rotates. With respect to their organization, each one of these units follows one of the five educational departments which have direct supervision of the implementation of educational programmes all over the country. These administrative educational departments are backed up in the implementation of executive missions by a number of specialized, central, technical units which deal with such things as planning, organization, syllabuses, human resource development, training, student missions, examinations, extra- curricular activities, and legal affairs. In addition there are a number of other consultative technical committees that offer technical services helpful to the educational process according to the area of specialization.

The educational system depended on the principle of centralization until the year 1981 when the educational area system was established. This was in accordance with the realization of a decentralization principle in education- a tendency inspired by modern educational trends that arose from the development and modernization needed in the educational process. The Al Ahmadi Educational Area was established in the year 1981/82 and at a later stage four other educational areas were established. These educational areas were given full authority in the direct executive administration of the educational process inside schools in addition to daily supervision. However in the new system, major technical operations such as planning, administration, training and research etc. have been kept under direct supervision of the higher administration system. The present system makes a division between the centralization of planning and the decentralization of execution. Consequently, the financial, administrative and productive

units, in general, are non-centrally run, while the specialized, consultative technical units are still under the supervision of the central administration. The responsibilities and authority of each unit, inside and outside the Ministry, were defined (Ministry of Education 1986b).

With regard to the structural organization of the Ministry, the fast growth and the great development in the quality and size of educational and pedagogical services have caused major and essential changes in the general structural organization of the Ministry of Education. These changes are exemplified in the establishment of various administrative bodies and specialized technical centers to deal with the expansion processes and to help high level administrators solve the increasing problems.

The Minister of Education is the head of this hierarchical structure, assisted by the Under-secretary and Assistant Under-Secretaries, who supervise a group of financial, administrative and technical organizational units. These units are divided into directorates which in turn, are divided into supervisors, divisions and sub-divisions ( see Figure 2.2).

The Ministry's educational services are completely financed by the government. All stages and types of government education are free for both Kuwaiti and foreign students. As for education in private schools, this is mainly financed by fees paid by the parents. However, a major part is also paid by the government to support private Arab education to lessen the parents' burden and to improve performance. The state has been generally concerned with the education sector and has been eager to provide it with all the means that will make the educational process a success, and will effect more national progress in all its aspects. All this has been directly reflected in an increasing share allocated for education in the state budget. Sapsted ( 1980, p.88) writes that " Not surprisingly,

Kuwait's top budget priority, education is currently gobbling up about a tenth of national expenditure. It is, as with as much else, an investment in the future" (see Table 2.8). This table indicates the development of the Public Budget of the Ministry of Education in the year 1985/86-91-92.

### **2.15 The Problems and Difficulties in the Ministry of Education**

In spite of the huge budgets that the Ministry of Education in Kuwait has access to and in spite of its attempts to improve education throughout the country, there are still many problems and difficulties that hamper educational progress in Kuwait. These difficulties are as follows:

- Inadequacy of efforts exerted in the literacy programmes.
- Low achievement, failure and school drop-out levels.
- Shortage in some technical specialisms and surplus in others.
- The reluctance of students to pursue scientific, technical and practical studies.
- The lack of participation of citizens in development efforts (Ministry of Education 1989).

With regard to the literacy campaign, it was observed that in spite of the efforts of the Ministry of Education to eradicate illiteracy, the statistics indicated that illiteracy still exists among the citizens in the country ( see Figure 2.3). This may indicate that there is a defect in the strategies used. In relation to this, it was observed that the problem of a lack of participation in educational development might be correlated with the problem of continuing illiteracy. The weakness of the illiteracy eradication programmes in determining its aims and in explaining the importance of education to the citizens and in indicating the role of education in the citizens' life, their future and their children's future may mean that the citizens ignore the need for education. As a result, their

participation is low as well. This in turn may negatively affect the development plans and functions of the illiteracy eradication centers in the country.

With regard to all of the difficulties, it was observed that the levels of low achievement, failure and drop-out in Kuwait are considered to be the most important problems that need to be solved. If we look at the points that the Ministry indicated, we find that these problems are related to each other. The neglect in putting into action far-reaching solutions to tackle the low achievement problem may lead to the phenomenon of failure and then to dropping-out. Also, it might be argued that these problems may be related to the other problems that the Ministry indicated such as, students not undertaking scientific and technical specialisations, since these specialisations need a high level of achievement in order to enable the student to keep pace with the improved curricula.

In conclusion, it can be said that to maintain a steady development of the Ministry's educational plan, in- depth scientific studies regarding achievement, failure and drop-out need to be carried out to provide successful solutions. In addition, suggestions resulting from such studies need to be enacted because this will help to solve the other problems, as all the problems are related to each other. This will then positively affect the development of the educational plan in Kuwait.

**Table 2.1 Progress in Preparation of Schools, Classrooms & Pupils Government  
General Education Kindergarten 1992/93- 1983/84.**

| Government Kindergartens |                |               | 1993/92 - 1984/83 |          |        | رياض الأطفال الحكومية |            |         |         |
|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|----------|--------|-----------------------|------------|---------|---------|
| Year                     | Students       |               | جملة              | التلاميذ |        | مدرسات                | الفصول     | المدارس | السنة   |
|                          | النسبة المئوية |               |                   | أنثى     | ذكر    |                       |            |         |         |
|                          | Percentage     |               |                   |          |        |                       |            |         |         |
|                          | لكل معلمة      | لكل فصل       |                   |          |        |                       |            |         |         |
|                          | Per teacher    | Per classroom | Total             | Female   | Male   | Teachers(F)           | Classrooms | Schools |         |
| 1983/84                  | 13.9           | 27.3          | 22,346            | 10,848   | 11,498 | 1,606                 | 819        | 77      | 1984/85 |
| 1984/85                  | 14.5           | 29.5          | 24,150            | 11,658   | 12,492 | 1,662                 | 820        | 78      | 1985/86 |
| 1985/86                  | 14.3           | 29.1          | 27,480            | 13,433   | 14,047 | 1,917                 | 942        | 94      | 1986/87 |
| 1986/87                  | 15.3           | 29.5          | 30,370            | 14,978   | 15,392 | 1,986                 | 1,028      | 102     | 1987/88 |
| 1987/88                  | 15.0           | 28.6          | 33,357            | 16,485   | 16,872 | 2,225                 | 1,167      | 112     | 1988/89 |
| 1988/89                  | 15.3           | 29.1          | 35,078            | 17,420   | 17,658 | 2,289                 | 1,206      | 113     | 1989/90 |
| 1989/90                  | 15.9           | 30.6          | 36,723            | 18,287   | 18,436 | 2,304                 | 1,264      | 120     | 1990/91 |
| 1990/91                  | 15.7           | 30.4          | 34,262            | 17,106   | 17,156 | 2,178                 | 1,128      | 117     | 1991/92 |
| 1991/92                  | 15.3           | 30.3          | 34,372            | 17,173   | 17,199 | 2,252                 | 1,133      | 118     | 1992/93 |
| 1992/93                  | 18.0           | 32.8          | 39,596            | 19,772   | 19,824 | 2,200                 | 1,204      | 120     | 1993/92 |

Source: Ministry of Planning, 1992, Annual Statistical Abstract, 29, p. 325. Kuwait.

**Table 2.2** Scheme of Study For Primary Stage General Education.

| Subjects                              | No. of Periods     |             |             |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                       | 1st & 2nd<br>Forms | 3rd<br>Form | 4th<br>Form |
| Arabic Language                       | 11                 | 10          | 10          |
| Islamic Education                     | 3                  | 3           | 3           |
| Science                               | 2                  | 3           | 3           |
| Mathematics                           | 5                  | 4           | 4           |
| Social Subjects                       | —                  | —           | 2           |
| Physical Education                    | 3                  | 3           | 2           |
| Practical Studies,<br>Works & Drawing | 3                  | 3           | 2           |
| Musical Education                     | 2                  | 2           | 2           |
| Free Activity                         | 1                  | 2           | 2           |
| Total                                 | 30                 | 30          | 30          |

**Source:** Ministry of Education (1989) A Report On The Development Of Education.

The State Of Kuwait. p. 44. Kuwait.



**Table 2.3 Progress in Preparation Of Schools, Classrooms, Teachers, and Pupils  
Government General Education Primary 1992/93- 1982/83.**

| Government Primary Schools |                              |         |         | 1993/92 - 1983/82 |        |          |        |       |            | المدارس الابتدائية الحكومية |       |         |      |     |         |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------------|--------|----------|--------|-------|------------|-----------------------------|-------|---------|------|-----|---------|
| Year                       | التلاميذ                     |         |         |                   |        | المدرسون |        |       | الفصول     |                             |       | المدارس |      |     | السنة   |
|                            | Students                     |         | جملة    | أنثى              | ذكر    | Teachers |        |       | Classrooms |                             |       | Schools |      |     |         |
|                            | النسبة المئوية<br>Percentage |         |         |                   |        |          |        |       |            |                             |       |         |      |     |         |
|                            | لكل مدرس                     | لكل فصل |         |                   |        | Total    | Female | Male  | جملة       | أنثى                        | ذكر   | الجملة  | أنثى | ذكر |         |
| Per teacher                | Per Class-room               | Total   | Female  | Male              | Total  | Female   | Male   | Total | Female     | Male                        | Total | Female  | Male |     |         |
| 1982/83                    | 17.7                         | 32.8    | 128,712 | 63,338            | 65,374 | 7,252    | 3,680  | 3,572 | 3,925      | 1,940                       | 1,985 | 178     | 87   | 91  | 1983/82 |
| 1983/84                    | 17.4                         | 32.6    | 127,606 | 62,987            | 64,619 | 7,304    | 3,759  | 3,545 | 3,912      | 1,944                       | 1,968 | 179     | 87   | 92  | 1984/83 |
| 1984/85                    | 16.9                         | 32.9    | 126,441 | 62,561            | 63,880 | 7,467    | 4,524  | 2,943 | 3,839      | 1,919                       | 1,920 | 183     | 90   | 93  | 1985/84 |
| 1985/86                    | 16.7                         | 32.7    | 124,066 | 61,578            | 62,488 | 7,445    | 4,531  | 2,914 | 3,792      | 1,901                       | 1,891 | 188     | 95   | 93  | 1986/85 |
| 1986/87                    | 16.7                         | 32.0    | 122,140 | 60,632            | 61,508 | 7,301    | 4,302  | 2,999 | 3,818      | 1,890                       | 1,928 | 193     | 97   | 96  | 1987/86 |
| 1987/88                    | 16.3                         | 31.2    | 119,932 | 59,657            | 60,275 | 7,371    | 3,688  | 3,683 | 3,844      | 1,907                       | 1,937 | 195     | 98   | 97  | 1988/87 |
| 1988/89                    | 16.3                         | 31.4    | 118,120 | 58,742            | 59,378 | 7,259    | 4,166  | 3,093 | 3,764      | 1,864                       | 1,900 | 195     | 97   | 98  | 1989/88 |
| 1989/90                    | 16.7                         | 31.7    | 118,778 | 59,144            | 59,634 | 7,102    | 3,472  | 3,630 | 3,747      | 1,870                       | 1,877 | 197     | 99   | 98  | 1990/89 |
| 1990/91                    | 16.1                         | 32.9    | 93,774  | 45,778            | 47,996 | 5,830    | 3,270  | 2,560 | 1,851      | 1,418                       | 1,433 | 152     | 75   | 77  | 1991/90 |
| 1991/92                    | 14.2                         | 31.4    | 89,459  | 41,210            | 41,249 | 5,795    | 3,324  | 2,471 | 2,625      | 1,307                       | 1,318 | 159     | 78   | 81  | 1992/91 |
| 1992/93                    | 15.1                         | 31.2    | 86,426  | 43,582            | 42,844 | 5,708    | 3,546  | 2,162 | 2,773      | 1,409                       | 1,364 | 162     | 80   | 82  | 1993/92 |

Source: Ministry Of Planning, (1992), Annual Statistical Abstract, 29, p. 326,  
Kuwait.

**Table 2.4** Scheme Of Study Intermediate Stage-General Education.

| Subjects                              | 1st & 2nd<br>Forms | 3rd & 4th<br>Forms |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Arabic Language                       | 6                  | 6                  |
| Islamic Education                     | 3                  | 2                  |
| Foreign Language                      | 5                  | 6                  |
| Mathematics                           | 4                  | 4                  |
| Science                               | 3                  | 3                  |
| Social Subjects                       | 2                  | 2                  |
| Physical Education                    | 2                  | 2                  |
| Activity                              | 2                  | 2                  |
| Practical Studies &<br>Arts Education | 2                  | 2                  |
| Musical Education                     | 1                  | 1                  |
| Domestic Science (girls)              | 2                  | 2                  |
| Total Boys                            | 30                 | 30                 |
| Total Girls                           | 32                 | 32                 |

**Source:** Ministry Of Education (1989) AReport Of Education In The State Of  
Kuwait, p. 45. Kuwait.

**Table 2.5 Progress in Preparation Of Schools, Classrooms, Teachers and Pupils**  
Government General Education Intermediate 1992/93- 1982/83.

| Government Intermediate Schools |                               |                                     |          |        |        | 1993/92 - 1983/82 |       |       |            |       |       | المدارس المتوسطة الحكومية |      |     |         |  |  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|--------|--------|-------------------|-------|-------|------------|-------|-------|---------------------------|------|-----|---------|--|--|
| Year                            | Students                      |                                     | التلاميذ |        |        | المدرسون          |       |       | الفصول     |       |       | المدارس                   |      |     | السنة   |  |  |
|                                 | النسبة المئوية<br>Percentage  |                                     | جملة     | أنثى   | ذكر    | Teachers          |       |       | Classrooms |       |       | Schools                   |      |     |         |  |  |
|                                 | لكل<br>مدرس<br>Per<br>teacher | لكل<br>فصل<br>Per<br>Class-<br>room |          |        |        | جملة              | أنثى  | ذكر   | جملة       | أنثى  | ذكر   | جملة                      | أنثى | ذكر |         |  |  |
|                                 |                               |                                     |          |        |        |                   |       |       |            |       |       |                           |      |     |         |  |  |
| 1982/83                         | 13.5                          | 32.1                                | 113,224  | 51,615 | 61,609 | 8,374             | 4,081 | 4,293 | 3,529      | 1,601 | 1,928 | 145                       | 66   | 79  | 1983/82 |  |  |
| 1983/84                         | 14.1                          | 32.5                                | 117,337  | 54,615 | 62,722 | 8,314             | 4,188 | 4,126 | 3,610      | 1,665 | 1,945 | 151                       | 71   | 80  | 1984/83 |  |  |
| 1984/85                         | 13.8                          | 32.6                                | 119,037  | 56,096 | 62,941 | 8,617             | 4,431 | 4,186 | 3,650      | 1,705 | 1,945 | 164                       | 77   | 87  | 1985/84 |  |  |
| 1985/86                         | 13.9                          | 32.9                                | 121,708  | 58,093 | 63,615 | 8,776             | 4,559 | 4,217 | 3,706      | 1,761 | 1,945 | 168                       | 84   | 84  | 1986/85 |  |  |
| 1986/87                         | 13.8                          | 33.9                                | 120,937  | 58,305 | 62,632 | 8,769             | 4,576 | 4,193 | 3,622      | 1,736 | 1,886 | 164                       | 81   | 83  | 1987/86 |  |  |
| 1987/88                         | 13.5                          | 32.5                                | 120,961  | 58,688 | 62,273 | 8,946             | 4,692 | 4,254 | 3,721      | 1,810 | 1,911 | 174                       | 86   | 88  | 1988/87 |  |  |
| 1988/89                         | 13.2                          | 32.4                                | 120,770  | 58,690 | 62,080 | 9,134             | 4,800 | 4,334 | 3,729      | 1,817 | 1,912 | 174                       | 86   | 88  | 1989/88 |  |  |
| 1989/90                         | 13.1                          | 32.5                                | 120,300  | 58,374 | 61,926 | 9,188             | 4,889 | 4,299 | 3,700      | 1,802 | 1,898 | 180                       | 93   | 87  | 1990/89 |  |  |
| 1990/91                         | 10.2                          | 31.2                                | 65,107   | 31,304 | 33,803 | 6,401             | 3,463 | 2,938 | 2,087      | 1,025 | 1,062 | 136                       | 72   | 64  | 1991/90 |  |  |
| 1991/92                         | 11.6                          | 32.2                                | 75,539   | 36,899 | 38,640 | 6,525             | 3,562 | 2,963 | 2,349      | 1,153 | 1,196 | 140                       | 73   | 67  | 1992/91 |  |  |
| 1992/93                         | 11.5                          | 32.7                                | 78,493   | 38,387 | 40,106 | 6,828             | 3,716 | 3,112 | 2,453      | 1,203 | 1,250 | 148                       | 78   | 70  | 1993/92 |  |  |

Source: Ministry Of Planning (1992). Annual Statistical Abstract, 29, p. 326. Kuwait.

**Table 2.6 Progress in Preparation Of Schools, Classrooms, Teachers and Pupils  
Government General Education Secondary 1992/93- 1982/83.**

| Government Secondary Schools |                |       |        | 1993/92 - 1983/82 |        |          |        |       |            |        |       |         | للمدارس الثانوية الحكومية |      |         |
|------------------------------|----------------|-------|--------|-------------------|--------|----------|--------|-------|------------|--------|-------|---------|---------------------------|------|---------|
| Year                         | التلاميذ       |       |        |                   |        | المدرسون |        |       | الفصول     |        |       | المدارس |                           |      | السنة   |
|                              | Students       |       | جملة   | أنثى              | ذكر    | Teachers |        |       | Classrooms |        |       | Schools |                           |      |         |
|                              | النسبة المئوية |       |        |                   |        |          |        |       |            |        |       |         |                           |      |         |
|                              | Percentage     |       |        |                   |        | Total    | Female | Male  | Total      | Female | Male  | Total   | Female                    | Male |         |
| لكل مدرس                     | لكل فصل        |       |        |                   | جملة   | أنثى     | ذكر    | جملة  | أنثى       | ذكر    | جملة  | أنثى    | ذكر                       |      |         |
| Per teacher                  | Per Class-room |       |        |                   |        |          |        |       |            |        |       |         |                           |      |         |
| 1982/83                      | 9.3            | 32.9  | 62,683 | 29,413            | 33,270 | 6,724    | 3,382  | 3,342 | 1,905      | 896    | 1,009 | 80      | 39                        | 41   | 1983/82 |
| 1983/84                      | 10.6           | 32.4  | 69,168 | 32,243            | 36,925 | 6,540    | 3,369  | 3,171 | 2,104      | 974    | 1,130 | 90      | 42                        | 48   | 1984/83 |
| 1984/85                      | 10.8           | 33.5  | 77,626 | 36,310            | 41,316 | 7,219    | 3,682  | 3,537 | 2,319      | 1,068  | 1,251 | 102     | 48                        | 54   | 1985/84 |
| 1985/86                      | 10.8           | 33.3  | 83,927 | 39,367            | 44,560 | 7,739    | 3,984  | 3,755 | 2,522      | 1,171  | 1,351 | 109     | 53                        | 56   | 1986/85 |
| 1986/87                      | 10.9           | 34.5  | 88,264 | 41,351            | 46,913 | 8,115    | 4,093  | 4,022 | 2,559      | 1,180  | 1,379 | 115     | 56                        | 59   | 1987/86 |
| 1987/88                      | 10.9           | 34.1  | 93,217 | 44,343            | 48,974 | 8,548    | 4,305  | 4,243 | 2,739      | 1,296  | 1,443 | 122     | 58                        | 64   | 1988/87 |
| 1988/89                      | 9.9            | 32.1  | 95,692 | 46,305            | 49,387 | 9,152    | 4,647  | 4,505 | 2,825      | 1,351  | 1,474 | 125     | 59                        | 66   | 1989/88 |
| 1989/90                      | 10.4           | 34.1  | 97,917 | 48,347            | 49,570 | 9,393    | 4,823  | 4,570 | 2,869      | 1,389  | 1,480 | 136     | 67                        | 69   | 1990/89 |
| 1990/91                      | 7.3            | 38.1  | 44,541 | 23,559            | 20,982 | 6,131    | 3,227  | 2,904 | 1,169      | 609    | 560   | 93      | 48                        | 45   | 1991/90 |
| 1991/92                      | 8.0            | 39.7  | 53,430 | 28,645            | 24,785 | 6,704    | 3,563  | 3,141 | 1,345      | 711    | 634   | 96      | 50                        | 46   | 1992/91 |
| 1992/93                      | 8.5            | 44.45 | 58,887 | 30,822            | 28,065 | 6,946    | 3,699  | 3,247 | 1,422      | 752    | 670   | 105     | 55                        | 50   | 1993/92 |

Source: Ministry Of Planning (1992). Annual Statistical Abstract, 29, p. 327.  
Kuwait.

**Table 2.7 Secondary Stage Comparative Table**

| Field of Study                    | 89 / 90 |      |            |           |            |           | 91 / 92 |      |            |           |            |           | 92 / 93 |      |            |           |            |           | Remarks |
|-----------------------------------|---------|------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|
|                                   | 1 st.   | 2 nd | 3 rd. lit. | 3 rd. sc. | 4 th. lit. | 4 th. sc. | 1 st.   | 2 nd | 3 rd. lit. | 3 rd. sc. | 4 th. lit. | 4 th. sc. | 1 st.   | 2 nd | 3 rd. lit. | 3 rd. sc. | 4 th. lit. | 4 th. sc. |         |
| Islamic Ed.                       | 3       | 2    | 2          | 2         | 2          | 2         | 3       | 2    | 3          | 2         | 2          | 3         | 3       | 2    | 2          | 2         | 2          | 2         |         |
| Arabic                            | 7       | 6    | 7          | 5         | 8          | 5         | 8       | 6    | 8          | 5         | 9          | 5         | 7       | 6    | 7          | 5         | 8          | 5         |         |
| English                           | 6       | 5    | 7          | 6         | 7          | 5         | 7       | 6    | 7          | 6         | 7          | 6         | 6       | 5    | 7          | 6         | 7          | 5         |         |
| French                            |         |      | 5          |           | 5          |           |         |      | 6          |           | 6          |           |         |      | 5          |           | 6          |           |         |
| Mathematics                       | 5       | 5    | 1          | 6         |            | 6         | 7       | 7    | 1          | 7         |            | 7         | 5       | 5    | 1          | 7         |            | 7         |         |
| Integrated Sc.                    | 3       |      |            |           |            |           | 4       |      |            |           |            |           | 3       |      |            |           |            |           |         |
| Scientific Cult.                  |         |      | 1          |           |            |           |         |      | 1          |           |            |           |         |      | 1          |           |            |           |         |
| Biology                           |         | 2    |            | 2         |            | 3         |         | 3    |            | 3         |            | 4         |         | 2    |            | 2         |            | 3         |         |
| Geology                           |         |      |            | 2         |            |           |         |      |            | 2         |            |           |         |      |            | 2         |            |           |         |
| Physics                           |         | 2    |            | 4         |            | 5         |         | 3    |            | 5         |            | 6         |         | 2    |            | 4         |            | 5         |         |
| Chemistry                         |         | 2    |            | 3         |            | 4         |         | 3    |            | 4         |            | 5         |         | 2    |            | 3         |            | 4         |         |
| Social Studies                    | 3       | 3    |            |           |            |           | 4       | 3    |            |           |            |           | 3       | 3    |            |           |            |           |         |
| Sociology                         |         |      | 1          |           |            |           |         |      | 1          |           |            |           |         |      | 2          |           |            |           |         |
| Economics                         |         |      | 2          |           |            |           |         |      | 2          |           |            |           |         |      | 2          |           |            |           |         |
| History                           |         |      | 2          |           | 2          |           |         |      | 2          |           | 3          |           |         |      | 2          |           | 2          |           |         |
| Geography                         |         |      | 2          |           | 2          |           |         |      | 3          |           | 3          |           |         |      | 2          |           | 2          |           |         |
| Psychology                        |         |      |            |           | 2          |           |         |      |            |           | 2          |           |         |      |            |           | 2          |           |         |
| Philosophy, Ethics & Logic        |         |      |            |           | 2          |           |         |      | 3          |           |            |           |         |      |            |           | 2          |           |         |
| Kuwait History                    |         |      |            |           |            |           | 1       | 1    | 1          | 1         |            |           |         |      |            |           |            |           |         |
| Practical Studies Arts & Computer | 2       | 2    |            |           |            |           | 2       | 2    |            |           |            |           | 3       | 3    |            |           |            |           |         |
| Domestic Economy-Girls            | 2       | 2    | 2          | 2         | 2          | 2         | 1       | 1    | 1          | 1         | 1          | 1         | 2       | 2    | 2          | 2         | 2          | 2         |         |
| Physical Ed.                      | 2       | 2    | 1          | 1         | 1          | 1         | 1       | 1    | 1          |           |            |           |         |      |            |           |            |           |         |
| Total                             | Boys    | 31   | 31         | 31        | 31         | 31        | 31      | 36   | 36         | 36        | 36         | 36        | 32      | 32   | 32         | 32        | 32         | 32        |         |
|                                   | Girls   | 33   | 33         | 33        | 33         | 33        | 33      | 37   | 37         | 37        | 37         | 37        | 34      | 34   | 34         | 34        | 34         | 34        |         |

**Source:** Ministry Of Education (1992), The Development Of Education National Report From State Of Kuwait 1990-1992, p. 28, Kuwait.

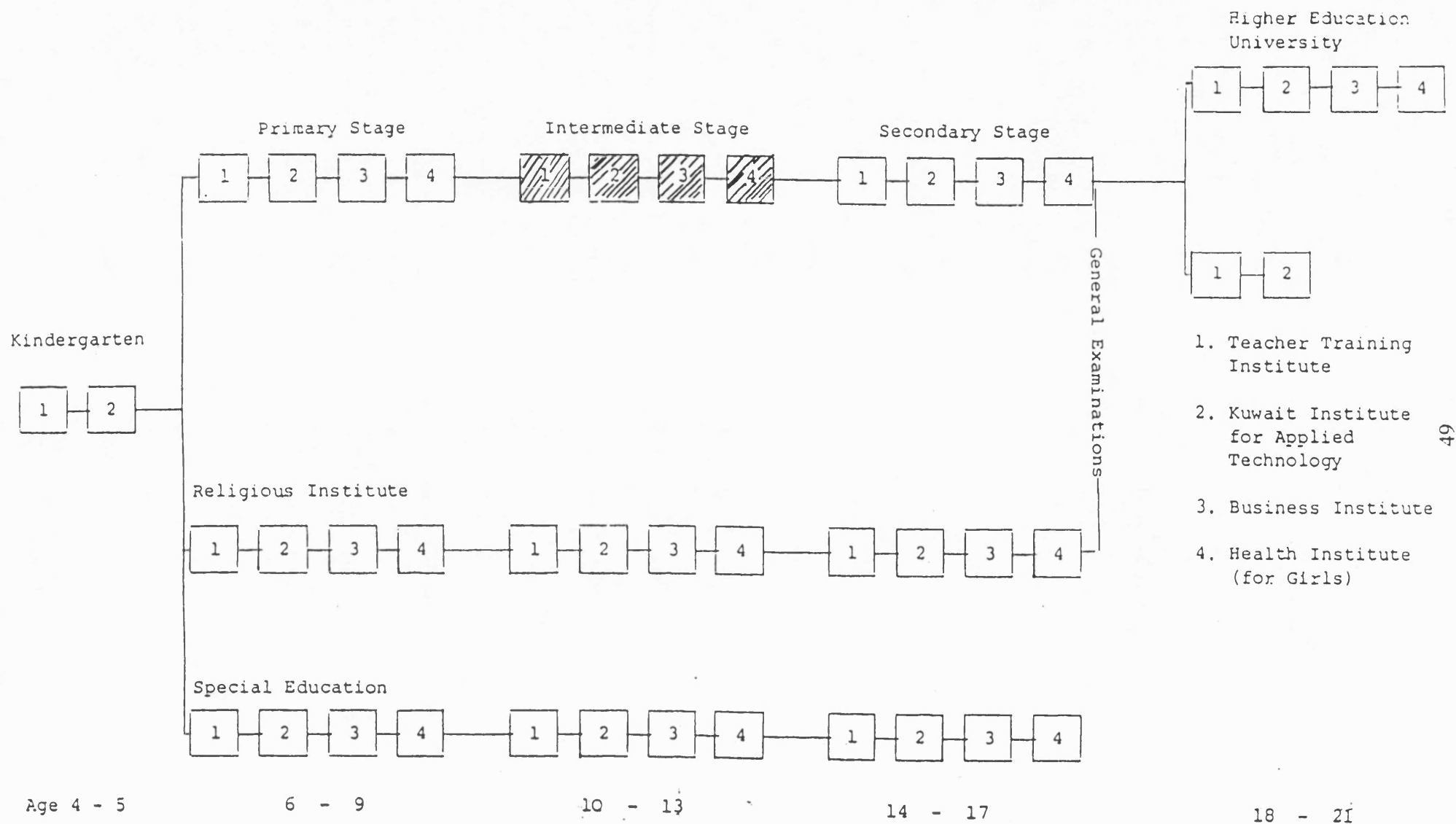
**Table 2.8** Development Of The Public Budget Of The Ministry Of Education In  
The Years 85/86- 89/90.

| Years | Total Budget<br>of the Ministry | Annual Growth | Percentage of<br>Annual Growth | Max. Figure | Percentage<br>Related to |
|-------|---------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
|       | K.D                             | K.D           | (%)                            | (%)         | the State<br>Budget (%)  |
| 85/86 | 270500000                       | Foundation    | Year                           | 100,0       | 7,9                      |
| 86/87 | 273280000                       | 2780000       | 1,0                            | 101,0       | 9,0                      |
| 87/88 | 296985111                       | 23705111      | 8,7                            | 109,7       | 9,4                      |
| 88/89 | 307870000                       | 10884889      | 3,7                            | 113,4       | 9,6                      |
| 89/90 | 307240000                       | (630000)      | 2,0                            | 113,2       | 9,23                     |

**Source:** Ministry Of Education (1992), The Development Of Education, National  
Report From State Of Kuwait. 1990-1992, p. 68, Kuwait.

**Figure 2.1** Educational Ladder in Kuwait

**Source:** Adapted from: Ministry of Education, 1984, Development of education.  
Kuwait: Ministry of Education Publication, pp 36-37



**Figure 2.2** The Hierarchical Organisation of The Ministry of Education

**Source:** Ministry of Education (1992), The Development of Education. National Report From State of Kuwait 1990-1992 p 71. Kuwait.

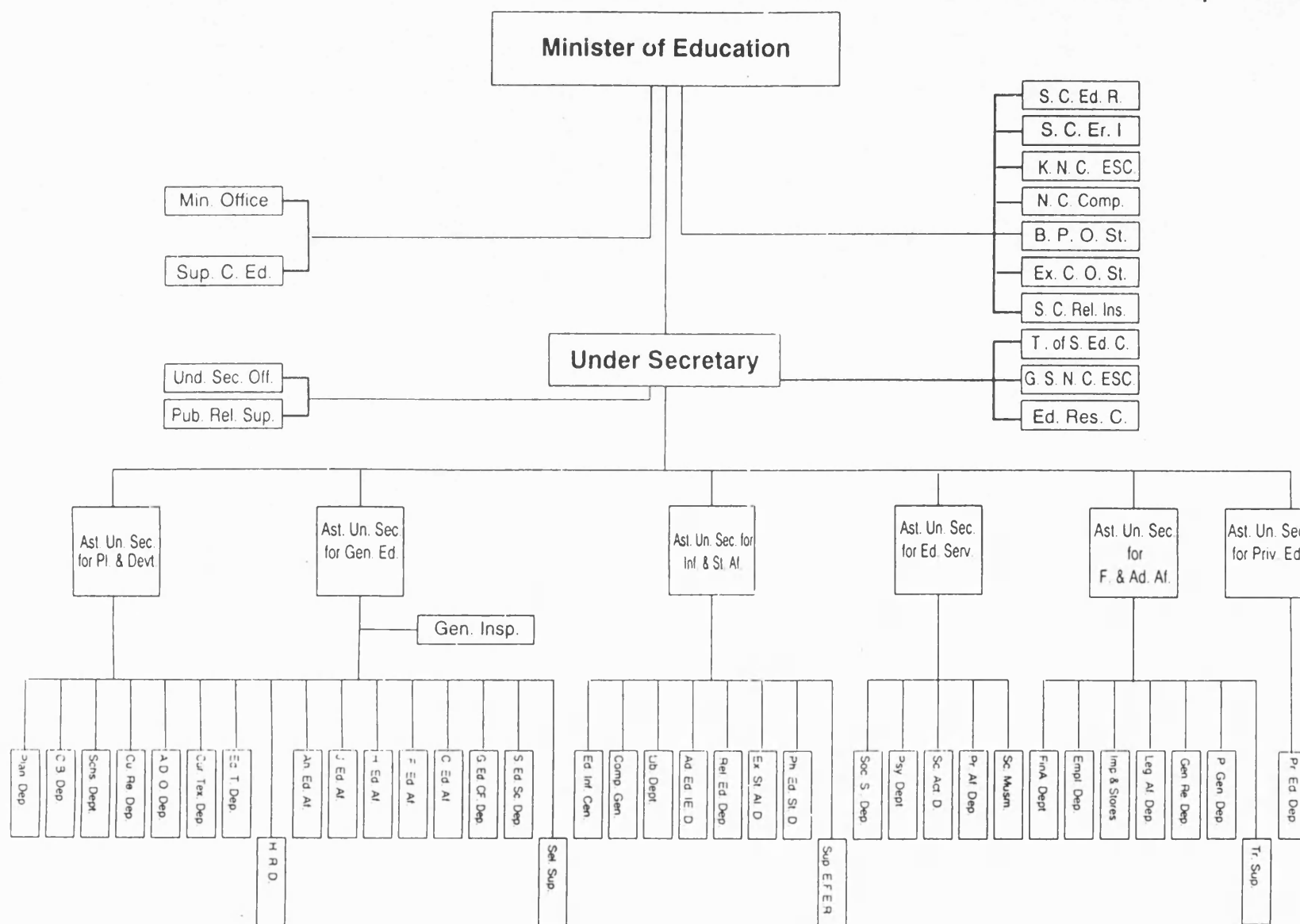
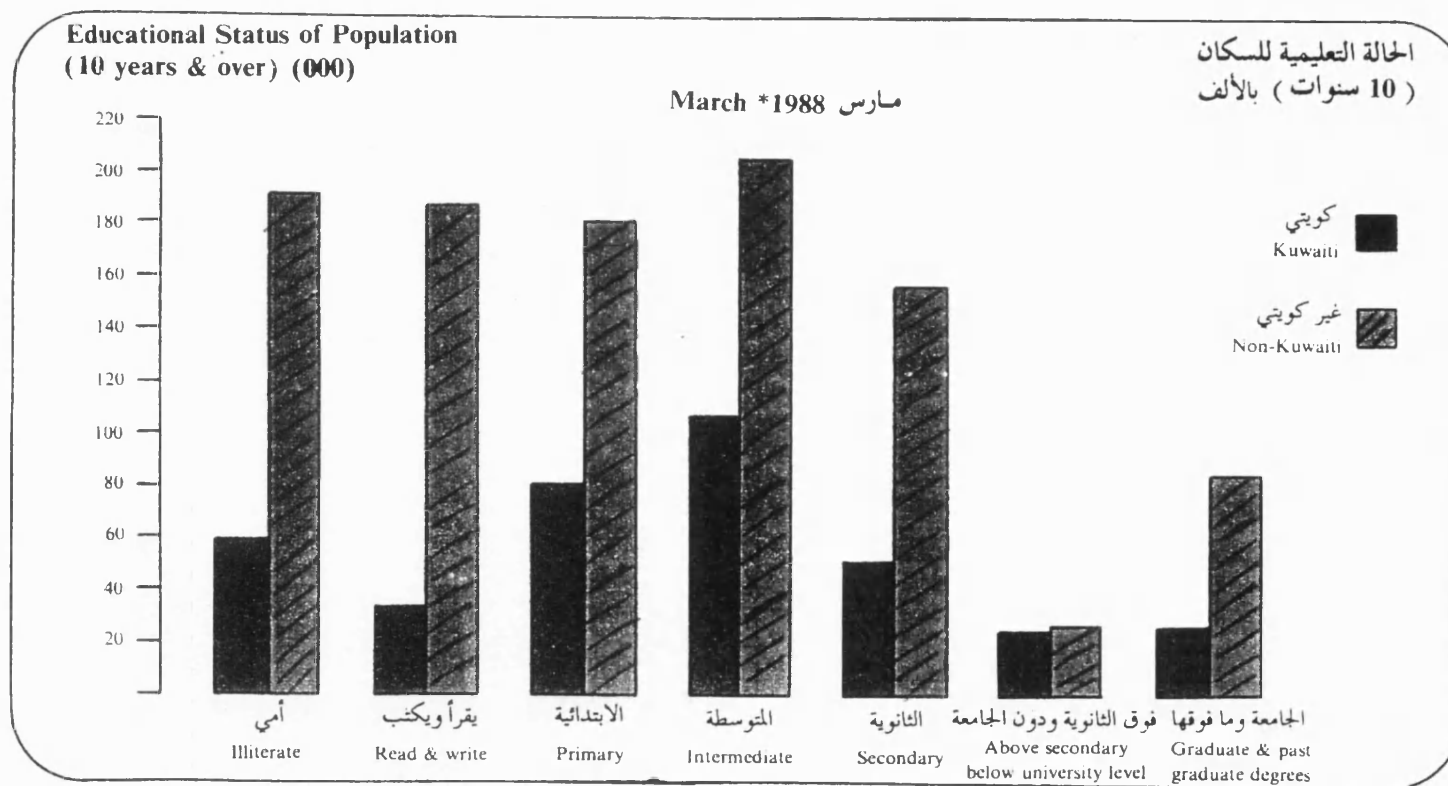




Table 2.9 Education Status Of Population.



Source: Ministry Of Planning (1992), Annual Statistical Abstract, 29, p. 32. Kuwait.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter will consider a range of theoretical issues which underpin the question of the relationship between socio-economic factors and educational achievement. In particular two explanatory models which will not be used are considered in some detail because they often provide the starting point for modern studies of educational performance.

#### **3.2 School Effects And Educational Achievement:**

Previous studies have indicated that both home and school may be considered to be factors that affect students' educational achievement. In this section the role the school plays in students' achievement will be discussed.

Without a doubt school is one of the most important institutions in society that transfers information, values and culture to the students. It also provides them with suitable experiences to prepare them for work which in turn establishes stability and balance in the society. Thus school both reflects society and contributes to its dynamic.

In both the UK and USA, throughout the 1950's and 1960's there was significant studies on how family circumstances affected students' achievement. In this tradition are the classic American studies of Coleman (1966) and Jencks (1972). These studies enquired whether going to school made any differences to the 'life chances' of children. Was it the case, for example, that in general, poor working class children went to school but ended up being poor working-class adults, and that the children of the middle class ended up being middle- class adults? Both Coleman and Jencks, on the basis of large-scale studies, concluded that school in fact made very little difference, that is, a child's test scores or examination results could be predicted far

more accurately from knowing the family background than from knowing which school the child went to. However, at the beginning of 1970's, mainly in advanced industrial countries, many studies began to focus more on how the characteristics of schools, administration, teachers, school organisation, classrooms, and principals might be responsible for the failure or success of students. The impetus for these kinds of studies was the need of the advanced countries governments to solve their economic situations and to improve the work force. The industrialized countries were interested in finding ways and systems that could realise their ambitions. In 1988, the UK government established a national core curriculum of core and foundation subjects and mounted an ambitious testing programme to assess pupils' attainment of the curricular objectives. In the USA most states established monitoring systems based on performance indicators (Selden, 1988).

At the beginning, studying the effects of school and teachers concentrated on the differences between schools regarding input and output factors and on the teachers' experiences inside the classroom. In USA a great deal of work in these areas was done.

Blair (1975), found that the teacher's effort in reading was consistently associated with students' reading performance. Horton (1979), examined selected teacher variables which were important in explaining students' achievement. The results indicated that the number of years of teaching experience and the extent of academic in-service training were the most important factors. Bennet (1972), examined the degree of the effect on pupils' learning at the first and second grades. His survey, which included two separate teacher samples, suggested that differences do exist in teacher's ability to produce academic growth in their pupils. In contrast, a study carried out by Mitchell (1972), on student achievement and teacher attitudes in elementary school found that there was no positive relationship between years of teaching experience, teacher certification, degree level and sixth grade student achievement.

School studies were also carried out in Third World countries. In Zaire, Sheline(1979), in his study on the effect of school sponsorship and other factors on academic achievement, concluded that the family background variables did not explain as much as school or student variables did. He found that the number of years of training of teachers in a school was the most important variable in explaining school mean scores in mathematics and in pupil attitudes towards school.

Other studies investigated the effects of teacher in-service training. Schilling (1974), pointed out that teachers' in -service training experience had a highly significant positive effect on adult basic education. Seefeldt (1971), also found a significant relationship between the volume of in-service training activities completed by the teacher and pupil achievement. On the other hand Giffune (1979), indicated that no significant results were to be found in analysing the effect of in-service teacher training programmes upon student ability.

Other studies examined the effects of school facilities on students' achievement. From them there is general agreement that suitable facilities lead to better opportunities for learning, and also that schools which perform poorly are generally schools without adequate staff or teaching facilities. For example, Gunsch (1972), carried out a study into school facilities and their relationship to student learning. The results showed that laboratory experience was valuable for students to learn and understand scientific concepts, principles, ideas, as well as to improve general attitudes towards science.

Simpson (1973) found the same.

Nadpatondo (1978) in Indonesia, concluded that the differences in school facilities in Indonesia had strong and significant direct effects on all measures of achievement. In Iraq, Badri (1979) believed that the problem of failure in teaching language in Iraq was related to such causes as lack of books in the school library, school buildings without proper study facilities, and the lack of teaching aids. In the State of Georgia, Chan (1979), found that there was a significant relationship between student achievement and school facilities. He added that pupils in school buildings with

modern facilities reached a higher level of achievement than pupils in school buildings with older facilities. As can be seen, the major results of the previous data indicated a significant relationship between academic achievement and the degree of adequacy of the school facilities.

Other studies took into account the effect of class size on students' achievement.

Some studies concluded that smaller classes were more effective than larger.

However, other studies have revealed the opposite, namely, that large classes lead to increased pupil achievement. A third category of studies has indicated that class size had no significant effect either way on student achievement. Cahen and Nikola's study (1979), of nearly 900,000 students, revealed that student achievement increases sharply when class size reduced to 15 or below. However, when McDermott (1977) tested the effect of a reduction of class size on educational achievement in the first and second grades, involving a total number of 1,815 students in 35 classes, he found that there was no significant effect from a reduction of class size on achievement.

Studies revolving around the input and the output of schools has continued for many decades. These have shown that there are statistically significant differences between schools in their results (Willms 1986; Gray 1989; Lockheed and Longford 1991).

However in spite of all these efforts little progress has been made in determining why some schools are more successful than others, and how to improve school practice (Levin 1980).

As a result of such inconclusive evidence and criticisms, many studies tried to focus on school progress instead of resource inputs (Good and Brophy 1986; Ralph and Fennessey 1983). A great many studies resulted; some of them interested in studying the interactions inside the school and expectations of high achievement, while others concentrated on studying the school climate and its effects on students' achievement and the outputs of the school (Anderson 1982).

The interest in studying school progress has developed a number of models one of which is called the "five factor model" for effective schools. The model postulated

that effective schools had some combination of the following characteristics: strong administrative leadership, a safe and orderly climate, an emphasis on basic academic skills, higher teacher expectation, and a system for monitoring pupil performance (Ralph and Fennessey, 1983).

If we look at the five factor model we will find that these factors are not only correlated with schooling results or educational achievement of students, but also with the intake composition of schools. Willms (1992, p32) in his book on monitoring school performance wrote: " Taking the five factors model as an example, a headteacher of high social-class school can probably display strong administrative leadership and establish a safe and orderly climate more easily than headteachers of schools in deprived areas." This means that there are connected factors between school processes, which require creating an inclusive model in order to know the factors that might affect the school and that might contribute to school outputs. Such a model would facilitate measuring these factors in clear way.

By using many studies dealing with this aspect Willms (1992) presents a list of constructs describing schooling process, classified according to a taxonomy of organizational climate specified by Tagiuri (1968), which comprises four categories: ecology (physical and material variables), milieu (student composition and characteristics of staff), social system (patterns and rules of operating and interacting), and culture (norms, benefits, values, and attitudes). Each aspect of these previous aspects describes a number of activities of students, classrooms, school, and area. Using this classification becomes easier to understand the differences between schools.

The following schedule explains the differences between school processes according to the previous classifications.

| level of measurement | Ecology  | Milieu   | Social system   | culture  |
|----------------------|--|--|---|--|
| student              |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*participation in school activities</li> <li>*relationship with other student</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*peer norms academic success</li> <li>*sense of efficiency</li> <li>*attitudes towards schools</li> </ul>             |
| class                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*class size</li> <li>*appearance of classroom</li> <li>*instructional resources</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*teacher characteristics</li> <li>-years experience</li> <li>-salary</li> <li>-level of education</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*ability grouping</li> <li>*disciplinary climate</li> <li>*academic press</li> <li>-time on academic</li> <li>amount of homework</li> <li>-high expectations</li> <li>-success in rewarded</li> <li>-emphasis on academic</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*teacher attitudes</li> <li>-sense of efficacy</li> <li>-commitment</li> <li>-morale</li> <li>-clear goals</li> </ul> |
| school               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*school size</li> <li>*age of building</li> <li>*appearance of building</li> <li>*per-student expenditures</li> <li>*access to community resources</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*teacher turnover</li> <li>*principal's characteristic</li> <li>-teacher experience</li> <li>-administrative experience</li> <li>-duration of current position</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*tracking, streaming</li> <li>*disciplinary climate</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*principal's expectations of teachers of students</li> </ul>  |
| District             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*district size</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*student composition</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*community district relationships</li> </ul>   |  |

By focusing on the school process and its previous variables as indicated by Willms, and which not only discussed the physical and material variables but also the general

atmosphere of the school, we can see that there are many possible factors that may affect school output and educational achievement. One particular factor which is important to consider is the effect of the peer group. Many studies have indicated the important role of the peer group. The early studies of Piaget (1950, 1952, 1965), Mead (1934), and Vygotsky (1962, 1978) in improving a child's language and building his personality and behaviour have played a big role in helping researchers to study the effects of peers on children. Piaget, in his studies on the internal interactions of children, for example, their moral development and imitation concluded that moral development is learned in the peer group. Also he found that the capacity of the children for imitating others increases with age. This means that this expanding capacity for modelling peer behaviour increases peer influence and so contributes to the increased influence of peers as the child develops. Iatridis (1977), mentioned that peer group setting is important for social and moral experiences as many of the things which the child learns within it fulfils the needs and objectives of the larger adult culture.

In addition, some studies concluded that the peer-group function of introductory learning occurs when cognition skills, concepts, attitudes and values are learned as a consequence of relations with peers (Corsaro 1985). It is clear that all this vast amount of learning vital to the child's development as a person, occurs among peers. Some Western studies have studied the role of the peer group in children's educational achievement. Corsaro (1985) found from his study that children are partly shaped in their own developmental experience through their interactions with peers and that children attempt to gain control over their social worlds through the use of language and discourse. Empirical and experimental studies by McCandlers, (1961, 1973) show that the influence of peers on school achievement and progression is marked. Borland (1989) found that there is a strong evidence to show that gifted students benefit both academically and socially from being grouped with intellectual peers. There is also a substantial research base that suggests a positive peer influence through cooperative



learning, peer tutoring, and modelling (Johnson, 1983). Wang and Habelow (1993) mentioned that peer support networks provide a sense of camaraderie and mutual respect that forms important protective mechanisms against stress and adversity and frames attitudes towards academic competence and success in school.

Some studies have investigated the time spent with peers as a factor involved in the peer group effect. This factor may be measured and then used to analyse the peer effects on the children from one school to another.

Asendorpf (1993), argued that children as they get older in Western cultures show an increasing orientation to peers and a decreasing orientation to parents. The central role of peer relationship for adolescents has been recognized for a long time. A field study of United States adolescents found that they spent 52 percent of their time with classmates and friends but only 18 percent of their time with family members (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 1984).

From the above it is clear that student achievement is not only a product of the academic capability of the individual, but also is an indication of the quality of the school programme and a result of the nurturing of various support networks including peers.

Children's behaviour inside the school has also been discussed by many studies. One of the major factors differentiating high and low-achieving schools in the Brookover (1979) study was the pupils' sense of efficacy versus academic futility. This refers to the extent to which pupils felt that they had control over their school successes and failures, whether other pupils punished them if they succeeded, and whether teachers cared about their progress.

As was seen in Willms list the learning processes inside the classroom and the teacher effects are also important factors that may affect children's educational achievement inside the school. For example, Lee and Bryk (1989) found that schools where pupils take a high number of academic courses, and where there is less latitude in the choice of courses, are more likely to have a higher level of achievement and a more equitable

distribution of achievement. Hopkins (1994) in his book on school improvement indicated the role of models of teaching on teaching children. He wrote:

"models of teaching, it is argued, are really models of learning. As we help students acquire information, ideas, skills, values, ways of thinking and means of expressing themselves, we are also teaching them how to learn. In fact, the most important long-term outcome may be the students' increased capabilities to learn more easily and effectively in the future both because of the knowledge and skill they have acquired, and because they have mastered learning processes." (p54.)

As Hopkins (1994) states, successful teachers are not simply charismatic, persuasive and expert presenters. Rather they present powerful cognitive and special tasks to their students and teach them how to make productive use of them.

Brophy and Good (1986) also indicated that there are consistently high levels of correlation between student achievement scores and classroom processes.

Other studies have considered academic press use inside the class and its importance on the children's achievement. Willms(1992) found schools with high academic press place a greater emphasis on academic skills, which is manifest in a number of school routines and processes. Moreover, (Doyle 1987) argues that classroom studies of teaching effects have generally supported a direct and structured approach to instruction. That is, students usually achieve more when a teacher clearly explains and illustrates what students are to learn; emphasizes academic goals, makes them explicit, and expects students to be able to master the curriculum; carefully organizes and sequences curriculum experiences; reviews regularly and hold students accountable for work; frequently asks direct and specific questions to monitor student's progress and checks their understanding.

Brophy (1983) has also reviewed the research on teaching behaviour as associated with student achievement gains. He concludes that, first, students learn more when teachers allocate available class time to academic activities. Second, students learn more when their success rates (responses to questions, answers to written work at the

desk) are high. Third, students learn more when questions are asked frequently and are relatively easy. Waiting for responses, acknowledging correct answers, and sticking with students who give partial or incorrect answers to give them a chance to improve their answers are all associated with achievement gain. Fourth, students learn more when they are on task a high proportion of class time. Fifth, students learn more in classes where their teachers spent most of the time actively teaching them rather than having students work on their own without direct teacher supervision. Sixth, students learn more when teachers structure information, using such techniques as advance organizers, outlining content, reviewing objectives, drawing attention to main ideas. Clarity of presentation and enthusiasm in presenting material are also associated with achievement gains.

Cooperation and the relationship between teachers and students has been the focal point of some researchers. One of Gray's (1990) three performance indicators of effective schools is the proportion of pupils who have a good or vital relationships with one or more teachers. This good or vital relationship is a fundamentally important aspect of the teaching process. Considerable research has attempted to relate teacher commitment and morale to pupils' academic achievement. (Kushman 1990, Rosenholtz 1989 a). Underlying this research is the notion that schools with committed satisfied teachers have less teacher absenteeism, lower turnover, less burnout, and less dysfunctional classroom behaviour (Rosenholtz 1989 b).

Although the appearance of school buildings and the school providing suitable possibilities are factors that some studies have examined in relation to children's educational achievement, the new factors that Willms indicated in his list highlighted quite different aspects of the school. One such factor was the characteristics and expectations of principals. The literature on school effectiveness provides some direction on the types of principal behaviour most relevant to schooling outcomes.

Generally, it emphasizes the indirect effect of principals' actions through shaping the attitudes and behaviour of teachers and pupils, and by establishing policies and procedures that facilitate teaching and learning (Rosenholtz 1985).

Complications and interactions in the school processes are demonstrated in Willms list are much and various. Hence, studying and measuring these interactions will be difficult and it will take a long time, especially when these interactions need observations, questionnaires, interviews and case studies. Raudenbush and Willms (1988) mentioned that the identification of important schooling processes is also complicated because factors at each level of the system can affect schooling outcomes. Additionally, these factors can interact across levels, and have indirect effects through factors at higher or lower levels. Bossert, Rowan, Dwyer, and Lee (1982) found factors like principal leadership are multifaceted. Furthermore, Rosenholtz (1989 b) found class size and instructional resources affect working conditions in the school, which in turn affect teacher's morale and commitment, and which finally affect pupils' outcomes.

From the above it is clear according to Western studies that school processes may play a part in affecting children's educational achievement from one school to another. In Kuwait however, the situation may be different in relation to the role of the school in educational achievement. Many studies in Kuwait have demonstrated a big similarity between the school systems in all governorates, resulting from the strict centralism that the Ministry of Education follows towards schools (Ministry of Education 1992, 1990; Al Roubay 1995) .

The centralized educational system in Kuwait which the Ministry of Education supervises is based on many factors. Firstly, there is unity in the external building of all schools in Kuwait including the intermediate schools, all the buildings were

designed in the same way in all governorates. In addition, the class size and the distribution of children inside the class depends on the Ministry of Education's decision, which is represented by the educational administrations in each governorate. Also the Ministry of Education allocates the same budget for each student and each school in the five governorates. Regarding the academic curriculum, all the curricula used in Kuwait schools are unified in all governorates. The supervision of teachers' preparation before and after service is controlled by the Ministry of Education in order to give the same education for all governorates. Experienced teachers are distributed equally in each school in order not to be concentrated in some governorates and not in others.

The role of The Ministry of Education, which is represented by the educational administrations in each governorates, is not only limited to the above but also it has a role in orientation, in order to give the same academic atmosphere for all schools. Also it gives the same aims for all schools administrations including formulating the policy to be followed in the relationship between school heads and teachers and the relationship between the teachers and students. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education decides on the academic subject to be introduced to the students and the time spent for each subject. In addition, the quantity of homework and the rules that should be followed inside the class are determined by the ministry.

The Ministry of Education also carefully oversees how its policies are carried out. A special director for every subject visits the school in order to check how far the inclusive plan is complied with. Also the heads in each school are responsible for co-operating with this special director in order to investigate and apply the ministry rules. In addition, the Ministry of Education gives unified exams for all schools to ensure uniformity between them.

The overall process in class takes place by the teacher presenting the subject and then the students discussing it. However, the teacher in the class does not encourage group work and this weakens the contact between the students and in turn minimises the effect of the peer group inside the school. Also there is no peer tutor system in intermediate schools in Kuwait. Indeed, the system followed is based on not combining students with each other. Supervising of students during break time or inside the class hinders or does not allow collective activity and thus minimises both the positive and negative effectiveness between them. This again minimises the peer effect inside schools in Kuwait. To sum up, the strong centralized system in intermediate schools in all the governorates in Kuwait prevents the existence of clear differences between the students' educational process from school to another in the five governorates, which in turn weakens the role of the school in its effect on the students' educational achievement in Kuwait.

### **3.3 Social class and educational achievement**

Relating social class and educational performance is one way of conceptualising the problem of student performance. The analysis is rooted in a socio- psychological attempt to find the problem within the social dynamics of the family. Studies and theories in this area are numerous. They demonstrate the different cultural phenomena of the family (values, behaviours, environment and language) and mention the effects of these on children's educational achievement.

For example, Hyman (1967), in a study of the value systems of different classes, has mentioned the role of the difference of values in social classes. He concluded that working class members place a lower value on education, and a lower value on achieving higher jobs. Compared to their middle-class counterparts, members of the working class believe that there is less chance for personal advancement. He added that this belief might be responsible for the lower value placed on education and high jobs. He argued that although this belief is based on a realistic assessment of the

situation- they do indeed have less opportunity- the belief itself reduces this opportunity even more. Hyman concluded in his study that the lower-class individual does not want as much success, knows he could not get it even if he wanted to, and does not want what might help him get success. A British study of values was carried out by Abrams et al (1985). A sample of 1,231 adults was interviewed, and a rather different range of values explored: six traditional values, in the spheres of religion, sex, family, patriotism, work and property. Some class differences were found: working-class people held more traditional views about the family, middle-class people about work. Rokeach (1973) found in his study that middle-class Americans valued a sense of accomplishment much more highly, as well as being more responsible, intellectual and imaginative than lower-class individuals. Kinloch (1987) in USA found that middle-class parents wanted an idealistic, thought-provoking, and ability-developing type of education for their children, while working-class parents wanted a vocational, skill-oriented and job-related.

In his study, Sugarman (1970), focused on the quality of jobs and behaviour between social classes and its effects on children's educational achievement. The jobs of middle-class people give an opportunity for continuous advancement in status and income which help to reach stability. Thus, planning for the future, for example the investment of money, time and energy, in practice is necessary to meet the requirements of higher level functions.

On the other hand, working-class jobs do not have the same variety or security and do not provide a high salary. Sugarman added that differences in the nature of jobs tend to create differences in attitudes, behaviours and outlook. As they have less opportunity to develop their situation, and less control over the future, manual workers tend to be fatalistic, concerned with immediate gratification and present-time oriented. Sugarman added that the members of the working class consider these orientations and attitudes as a part of their subculture. This means that students from

this group origins will therefore be socialized in terms of their parents. He explained that this may account, at least in part, for their low level of educational achievement. He added that immediate gratification emphasizes the enjoyment of pleasures of the moment rather than sacrifice for future reward, and leads to a lack of long term effort towards examination success. Present-time orientation may further minimize the motivation for academic achievement whereas an emphasis on long-term aims and planning for the future can encourage pupils to stay longer in full-time education by introducing a purpose for their stay. Fatalism also involves an acceptance of the present situation rather than attempts to improve it as such it will not encourage attaining high achievement in the classroom. Sugarman concluded in his study that the subculture of pupils from working-class backgrounds has a negative effect on their school performance. Argyle (1994 p 89) wrote "Middle-class people are used to being treated well at work, to being consulted and to democratic decision-making. Working-class people are more likely to be at the lower end of a hierarchy where they have no say at all." These styles are likely to be passed on to the family. Kohn and Schooler (1973) found that working-class men as soon as they have taken off their working clothes they treat wives and children as they are treated by their bosses, demand subjection, service, authority.

In addition, Douglas (1964), in his famous study of the home and the school, indicated the role of environmental effects inside the home on children's educational achievement. He divided the students into four social class grouping and studied the same group over time (longitudinal study). Douglas found important differences in educational attainment between students of similar ability but from different social classes. He demonstrated that 77% of upper middle class, 60% of lower middle class, 53% of upper working class and 37% of lower working class students gained good certificates at GCE 'O' level. Comparing students of lower ability, he found even larger achievement differences related to social class. He also found that length of



stay in the educational system was related to social class. The single most important factor appeared to be the degree of parental interest in their children's education, and that parental interest and encouragement became increasingly important as a spur to high achievement as the children grew older. This interest which was represented by frequent visits to school to ask about the children's achievement, which reflected the positive role of the parents had clear effects on the children. Douglas argued that during primary socialization, middle-class children received a great deal of stimulus and attention from their parents which formed a basis for high achievement in schools. Oakley (1974) found that 40 percent of middle-class fathers had high participation in child care, compared with 10 percent of working-class fathers. Also, Newzon (1976) indicated that at age 7, more middle-class children read books a lot at home, wrote at home for their own pleasure, had specific collections and passed their own toys.

A further study by Bernstein (1961,1972) focused on studying speech patterns between social classes to show how these may account for differential educational achievement. Bernstein distinguished two forms of speech pattern which he terms the 'elaborated code' and the 'restricted code'. In brief, restricted codes are a kind of shorthand speech. Those conversing in terms of the code have so much in common that there is no need to make meanings explicit in speech. In contrast, an elaborated code explicitly verbalizes many of the meanings which are taken for granted in a restricted code. Bernstein described the origins of social class speech codes in terms of family relationships and socialization practices, and the nature of manual and non-manual jobs. He explained that working-class family life fosters the development of restricted codes. The positions of the members of the working-class family are clear-cut and distinct which does not require more discussion in verbal communication. Whereas members of middle-class families tend to relate more as individuals rather than in terms of their ascribed positions. In this class the relationships seem to be less

clear-cut and based more on discussion and argument. This requires meanings to be more explained, rules argued and intentions spelled out.

Thus, middle class family relationships encourage the use of an elaborated code.

Bernstein also demonstrated that working-class occupations themselves give little variety, offer few opportunities to share in decision making and require manual rather than verbal skills in work. So the nature of the job in the working class actually discourages the development of an elaborated code. By comparison middle-class jobs introduce more variety, involve greater negotiation and argument in reaching decisions and therefore require more elaborated speech patterns.

From these results, Bernstein attempted to discuss the effects of social class and speech patterns inside the school. He indicated that an elaborated code which may be part of a middle class student's expression is superior for explicitly differentiating and distinguishing objects and events. It is also useful for analysing relationships between the students, for logically and rationally developing an argument, for making generalizations and for handling higher level concepts. As these skills form an important part of formal education, the limitation of working-class pupils to a restricted code may provide a partial explanation for their relatively low achievement. Robinson (1978) concludes that working-class mothers use a restricted code by giving commands without reasons, while middle-class mothers use an elaborated code in giving reasons so that the child can work out itself what it should do. Lawton (1968) found that some code-switching was greater for middle-class children, and Collett et al (1981) found working-class children did not shift much to the use of the elaborated code in a situation where the speaker and listener could not see one another. On the other hand, in everyday life working-class children probably have to shift more between school and home (Hudson 1980).

At the end of the 1960's and the beginning of the 1970's "Operation Head Start" was carried out by the office of Economic Opportunity in USA. The project was

conducted in some low income areas in Harlem and it cost billions of dollars (Haralambos 1995). The aim of the operation was to provide planned enrichment and a stimulating educational environment to instill achievement motivation and lay the foundation for effective learning in the school system. Part of the project was a programme of pre-school language education which drilled young children in the use of standard English. But the results were very disappointing. Caldwell, ( in Labov, 1973) argued that the programmes failed to combat the influences of the home environment and suggested that children should be removed from their parents during the day and placed in institutions which provide educationally oriented day care for culturally deprived children between six months and three years of age. Caldwell explained that in this way the cycle of culturally deprived parents producing culturally deprived children would be broken.

From the results of Operation Head Start, it was observed that family culture continued to play a definite role in affecting students' achievement even when there were some attempts to eliminate the cultural differences between students.

The first early studies became the basis for many studies that followed. Such literature focused on studying the cultural situations, differences (values, behaviours and language) and the internal situations of the family between social classes, to find an answer to the question why some students achieve higher than others.

In the literature review chapter of this thesis various studies of this type will be discussed.

The theories based on family and social class were soon accompanied by a variety of alternative theories and concepts. Some of the new theories considered the educational system itself to be responsible for low achievement of students in schools. Bowles and Gintis (1976) in their book " Schooling in Capitalist America", created an uproar in America. The book offers a polemic against the educational system within the capitalist system. The basis of this book from which many new concepts were

drawn was based on the conclusion that the educational system does not help social mobility, instead it contributes to reinforcing the social systems common in a society which does not include social equity. In the view of this theory the educational system reproduces the unequal socio-economic relationships which exist in the society. In so doing, the educational system increases the lack of equity in socio-economic construction in the society which serves capitalism. Bowles and Gintis (1976) also demonstrated that although the aim of the educational reformation that took place in USA was to find an equitable competition between society members in all its classes, the results of the educational reformation at the time of publishing their book (1976) had not instigated this aim. Instead the opposite was true; the schools served to keep and reinforce the constructional graduation of the division of labour which already exists in the society, and which serves the capitalist system's interests. The book further stated that the educational system helps to produce the right persons for the right jobs, in which each person is appointed according to his social situation and his expected location in the future. This means that schools prepare the working class children to be workers in the future. And this takes place by implanting preparations, tendencies and directions for the successful worker in them. This in turn helps in reinforcing the capitalist system.

In Bowles' and Gintis' view the schools prepare the working-class students in different ways from the preparation of the high and middle class students. This means that although all different social classes of students study in the same school, the school treats and teaches every student according to the social class that he/she belongs to. So the educational system creates a kind of consciousness related to the lower class and another one related to the higher class. This creation of class consciousness may of course start in the home but what is observed is that the school reinforces this creation instead of minimizing it.

The ideas that were put forward in Bowles and Gintis' theory were not new but reflected a general critical direction of many studies. In the 1960's, studies focused on the efficiency of the educational system and the real function of education. Some studies argued that education is a means that the country depends on to dominate the people (Carnoy 1982). Other studies argued that education is a means that the higher social classes in the society use to dominate the lower classes. All of this leads to the same result, which is the reproduction in school for classes in the society and which leads to inequality between classes (Sharp & Green 1975, Bernstein 1977). Many studies appeared which explained how educational output is unequal between classes. In fact, a new expression in educational sociology arose "The Hidden Curriculum", which was used to recognise the operations that lead to this inequality between the classes. Moreover, many other writers in different parts of the world supported this theory. In France, Bourdieu (1977) developed his own distinctive cultural explanation for achievement, and of the role of education in society. He argued that working-class failure is the fault of the education system and not working-class culture. He demonstrated that the major role of the education system is cultural reproduction. This does not involve the transmission of the culture of society as a whole, but instead, the reproduction of the culture of the dominant classes. This leads to an unity between the school culture and the culture of the dominant class in the school. The educational achievement of social groups is therefore directly related to the amount of cultural capital they possess. Thus middle-class students have higher success rates than working-class students because middle-class subculture is closer to the dominant culture. In the UK, Young (1971) carried out studies in the same field. He argued that those in positions of power will attempt to define what is taken as a knowledge. They will tend to define their own knowledge as superior, to institutionalize it in educational establishments, and to measure educational achievement in terms of it.

The reproduction theory continued to develop and put forward the view that there are 'Transformational Elements' that happen during the educational operation. This means that during the reproduction a simple social mobility takes place. This supported Willis's (1977) study which focused on studying the labouring class in Hummer Town. Willis found that the school contained two kinds of students, the first kind he called 'The Lads', the other one called 'The Ear Ole's'. The Ear Ole's term was equivalent to the students attention and perseverance and in turn their performance. So Willis arrived at a criticism of reproduction theory in which he found that there are little groups who may benefit from the educational system. Giroux (1983) in his study indicated that reproduction theory is not all inclusive and not firm because there is a small chance that there are transformations that may lead to social mobility in European countries.

Subsequently, many studies in the world argued that reproduction theory may also apply to a number of non-western and non-capitalist countries. For example, Lapidus (1978) demonstrated that reproduction operation is a phenomenon observed in Soviet Union. In China, Saywell (1980) and Shirk (1979) concluded from their studies that reproduction operation for socio-economic inequality between classes also takes place as a result of the educational system that is followed.

One Arabic study indicated that there is the possibility to apply this theory in some Arabic societies, depending on the socio-economic situation in each society ( Saidawi, 1982). Ahmed, (1993) indicated that it is difficult to apply the reproduction theory, evolved in Western countries, to all Arabic societies because of the differences in the cultural, socio-economic and political situations in these societies. However, Al Mousallam (1988) in her study on Kuwaiti society tried to carry out a statistical comparison and critical analysis of Kuwaiti Society. She demonstrated that Kuwait, which has only a small population and a large amount of economic resources

has had to seek the support of a foreign work-force and this work-force represents three-quarters of the work force that drives the country. This means that a majority of the work force in Kuwait is non-Kuwaiti and is therefore not a product of the national educational system. Thus it is unclear whether the reproduction theory can be applied to Kuwait, because the relationship between the educational system, its output and the economic expansion is indirect and unclear in Kuwait society. Al Mousallam (1984) added that the educational system in Kuwait does not work on reproduction of the socio-economic relationships by its output itself, it seeks to change and transform the society. This is achieved by giving free education, unified curricula, carefully selected teachers, provision of textbooks, notebooks, stationery and even clothing in all five governorates. Also, she added that " Because of the governmental interest in raising the educational level of the whole society, it has implemented a reward policy for those who finish high school by committing itself to giving them white collar jobs. On the other hand, because of its commitment to employ any Kuwaiti applying for a job in the governmental sector, it has provided blue collar jobs for those who do not have a high school degree" p 299. Indeed in Kuwait there exists the Al Takweet policy which encourages Kuwaiti citizens to attain a high education in order to be able to reach high positions in the country instead of foreign workers. ( Basher, 1987) indicated that Kuwait's education policy encourages all indigenous social classes to achieve educationally in order to serve society.

### 3.4 Summary

Reproduction theory would seem to entail the view that there is a direct link between the education system and the economy. In Kuwait this link is **fractured** because a large percentage of lower class jobs are taken by foreign workers. The intention of the Kuwait education system is to try and improve the performance of Kuwaiti nationals so that they are capable of performing the most important jobs in the system. To this end the system tries to promote high educational achievement amongst all Kuwaitis in

its separate school system. The children of foreign workers are educated in a separate system. In a special sense Kuwaiti schools have a mission to promote all the children of Kuwaiti society. The fact that home background is still an important predictor of educational achievement raises interesting questions about the application of reproduction theory in this school sector in Kuwait. Without more detailed studies of school processes it is impossible to come to a clear view about the validity of its application. However, for the purpose of this thesis it does not seem a relevant consideration. This thesis takes at face value the view that enormous efforts are made to make all Kuwaiti schools **the same**, wherever they located. The government strictly controls both subject curriculum and pedagogy, and the way in which schools are organised means that peer culture is also likely to have only a modest influence. This leaves home background factor as **crucial**.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **4.1 Introduction:**

During the last decade, many countries in the world have paid a great deal of attention to developing their educational programmes. In this, attention has been increasingly paid to defining how student performance in school is related to factors which could affect the quality of their educational achievement. There is a great deal of literature that is dedicated to the examination of factors that contribute to educational achievement. These factors generally fall into three categories;

1. Factors related to student's cultural and socio-economic background, which include parental occupation, parental education, family size and family income. These also include family interest or support and parents' aspirations.
2. Psychological factors, including intelligence, the student's age and motivation.
3. School factors involving aspects such as instructional materials, quality of teachers, class size, atmosphere of the school, buildings and laboratories.

The results of many studies in the world indicate that these factors have a differential effect on student's educational achievement. For example, Bond (1981 p 239) states that "It is generally accepted that children from lower socio-economic groups do less well [ in related areas of achievement] than do their counterparts from higher socio-economic groups."

The literature review in this chapter will be confined to existing studies concentrating on the effect of socio-economic factors on educational achievement. This should cast some light on the problems which this research deals with, and also help to identify the factors that might contribute to the different educational achievement in intermediate schools in

Kuwait. This review has focused on different studies not only in the USA and Europe, but also in Africa, Asia, and Arab countries. There are many reasons for choosing studies from different countries. First, in-depth knowledge is needed about different methodologies used in solving similar research problems and from these the most suitable methodology for the nature and aims of our research can be chosen. Second, knowledge about different studies in different environments and cultures in the world may increase the depth of understanding in the subject. Third, knowledge about different studies in similar environments, cultures, traditions, and religions helps to formulate the best strategy for treating the subject. For example, knowledge of the studies that have been done before in some countries which are associated with Kuwait in culture, tradition, and religion will help the researcher in his study. Fourth, choosing studies from different countries helps to focus on the fundamental understanding of phenomena, for example, the literature review suggests that there were similarities between the developed countries and similarly there were similar results among the less developed countries. This helps the researcher to analyse the findings with a general view.

#### **4.2 The Previous Studies in Kuwait**

The beginning of interest in the study of the socio- economic factors of the family was produced by a study by Al- Namer (1985) about failure and drop-out in Kuwaiti schools. This was carried out by giving questionnaires to a number of teachers and headmasters. During this study Al Namer realised that the socio-economic factors of the family appeared to play a major role in students' failure and drop-out. This information was suggested by the views of the teachers and headmasters during the questionnaire. So Al- Namer recommended a study of low achievement in students and the reasons for it, which he believed led to failure and drop-out.

In 1987 Al- Rasheed carried out a study of two groups of students (high and low achieving only) in primary school. The study was based on students' answers to questionnaires. He examined factors such as cultural and socio-economic background, family income, family size, and their effect on the pupils' progress in elementary school. During a statistical analysis he found a significant relationship between the socio-economic background of the family and the students' performance in the school. Al Khulaifi and Al Shaik (1987) came to the same conclusion when they did a study on a sample of the first year's students of the primary school.

Although these small studies carried out in Kuwait focused on studying the socio-economic factors of the family and its effect on achievement, they were not in-depth enough and they ignored the following aspects. Firstly, they did not take an inclusive sample, for example; Al Rasheed chose only the two groups of high and low achievers to search for the relationship between the socio-economic factors and the students' achievement, ignoring the other groups. Al- Khulaifi and Al- Shaik's studies did not include all governorates in Kuwait. Secondly, the previous studies ignored some other socio-economic factors that could have affected students' achievement; such as parents' aspirations and expectations, parents' supervision, parental marital status, ordinal position of the child, and home environment. These factors may have a strong bearing on the low achievement problem. Thirdly, these previous studies did not study the interaction and social situation in the Kuwaiti family. Studying the situation in the family may lead to a clearer picture of the way in which socio-economic factors have their effects on the students' achievement. Fourthly, the previous studies ignored the principle of triangulation for acquiring information. Triangulation in this respect means acquiring information from the student, the school (teachers and social specialist), and the family in order to make this information more reliable.

There is an interaction and connection between the socio-economic factors. When studying these factors and their effect on educational achievement there should be in-depth treatment. Thus there is a need to study all these factors in general to look at a wide range of studies from a variety of countries.

The literature review which follows will give a clear picture of the interest in the effect of socio-economic factors on educational achievement, and will also survey the development of methodologies, samples, and findings of studies which have been undertaken during the last decades. Such studies are of significance since they offer indications and guide lines for the present study.

The factors that will be reviewed are the cultural and socio-economic background of pupils including, parents' occupation, parents' education, family income, family size, home environment, ordinal position of the child, parents' supervision, parents' aspirations, and parents' marital status.

#### **4.3 Cultural and Socio-economic Factors**

The variables involved in the cultural and socio-economic status of the family cover aspects such as the parental level of education, the parental level of occupation and family size and family income. Some studies found a strong relationship between cultural and socio-economic background and educational achievement, while other studies do not support this result. In the USA, Coleman (1966) reported that socio-economic factors were strongly related to academic achievement and that when these factors were statistically controlled, school characteristics accounted for only a small fraction of differences in student achievement.

Mahler (1971) made an investigation into pupils' cultural and socio-economic background in schools in the United States of America, the purpose of which was to determine to what extent academic achievement was affected by parental education,

father's occupation and family income. Mahler's findings revealed that pupil achievement was strongly affected by cultural and socio-economic background. Sizemore (1972), in a study to examine the relationship of family background ( occupation of household head, fathers' and mothers' education, mothers' valuing of education, family income), and teachers' characteristics with the educational achievement of whites and blacks in USA, found that family background explained more of the variation in pupil achievement than did teacher attributes. One possible interpretation of these results is that blacks are more sensitive than whites to their school environment. Creamer and Lorentz (1979), from their study of fifth and sixth grade students in Georgia in USA found that students from a high socio-economic background scored higher in reading than did students from a lower socio-economic background.

In the 1980's in Louisiana in USA, Scott and Teddlie (1987) examined the relationships among students' socio-economic status (SES), student, teacher and parent expectations for the children's education, and how these groups of respondents attribute responsibility for learning and achievement. They found that socio-economic status is the best single predictor of achievement for their model. Walberg (1986) who studied third, sixth and ninth grade students in a range from 261 to 507 ( depending on grade level and test) in New Jersey (USA) districts determined that average student test scores were significantly associated with the socio-economic status of the districts. Higher socio-economic status districts, as expected achieved more than lower socio-economic status districts.

In the 1990's there are still more studies that confirm the existence of a relationship between socio-economic status and educational achievement. For example, Slavin (1991), found that children of higher SES tend to achieve higher in school and receive greater parental support for school achievement than students of lower SES. In Israel Katz and others (1992) found that in the programmes ethnically Oriental pupils from a

lower achievement-oriented environment and lower socio-economic status were assigned to integrated classrooms together with higher achievement-oriented and higher socio-economic status students of Western ethnic background. A number of interventions designed to promote improved academic achievement were implemented at the school. Analysis indicated that pupils of lower socio-economic status assigned to the experimental group achieved significantly higher reading scores than pupils of lower socio-economic status in the control group attending a non-integrated school. However, pupils of higher socio-economic status studying in the integrated school and belonging to a comparison group achieved higher scores on the research instrument than members of either the experimental or the control groups despite the interventions undertaken to close the achievement gap. It appears that although the interventions undertaken contributed to academic success of the experimental group subjects, they did not go all the way towards closing the achievement gap between lower and higher socio-economic status pupils. However, Schultz (1993), in a correlational study, examined the relationships between socio-economic advantage, achievement motivation, and academic performance in an urban elementary school population of 130 minority students (African, American, Hispanic). Multivariate analysis in this study revealed that socio-economic advantage and achievement motivation are significant mediators of academic performance in a minority of children. In USA Caldas (1993), examined the direct effects on, and contribution of, several input and process factors on public school achievement in Louisiana. His study showed that socio-economic status was the strongest predictor of school achievement.

In The Third World Countries, for example in African countries, White (1976) stated that the culture and socio-economic background measures ( education and quality of dwelling, occupation, income) correlated significantly lower with achievement than such variables as home atmosphere and school resources. In Uganda during the 1970's,

Heyneman (1976, p.44) found that there was no correlation between a primary school pupil's social background and his or her total score on the National Primary Learning Examination. He measured the social background by collecting information about the educational level and occupation of each pupil's parents as well as information regarding the kind and number of possessions in their houses. The correlation was approximately zero when the socio-economic status measures were treated separately and also when they were treated collectively as a unit. However, further research in African countries has revealed that socio-economic background factors do have a considerable effect on differences in pupils' educational achievement. In Kenya, Maundu (1988, p55) observed that " The level of education and type of occupation of parents are becoming increasingly important in determining their children's achievement at both the primary and secondary school levels". In Kenya, Nigeria and Malawi, a number of researchers concluded that there was a significant relationship between the students' socio-economic background and their educational achievement in school ( Nkinyangi 1980; Osman 1982, Marlaine et al 1989).

There has also been much research done in Asian countries. For example, in the Philippines, Smith and Cheung (1986 ) noted that parents' occupational and educational levels have shaped students' achievement in school, with the same level of magnitude, since the early twentieth century. In Indonesia, Chernichorsky and Meesook (1985), in their study using household income as a rough proxy for the students' social class, found significant educational achievement effects. King and Lillard (1987) in Malaysia found similar effects. Haron (1977) in Indonesia, Ryan (1973 ) in Iran, in their studies indicated that family background appears to determine students' achievement more strongly in urban schools, whereas school factors have a greater influence on the achievement of rural and very poor children. In Korean academic high schools, Sangheon, Um (1990)

found that students from higher socio-economic status tended to have a relatively lower mean achievement.

Research in Arab countries has not produced any conclusive results. For example, Dawoud (1984) in his study of 600 intermediate school pupils in Al-'men Governorate Iraq, found that students coming from higher socio-economic background had better achievement than students from the lower classes. Sami (1981) in Egypt, found that there was no significant difference between the educational success of students of higher middle classes studying in the same schools. Also in Egypt, El-Shikhaby (1983) found that the higher the SES of the family, the more likely their children were to get higher scores, and the lower the SES of family, the more likely their children were to get lower scores. His study was based on 517 secondary school pupils in North Cairo. Research in the Arabian Gulf countries, for example in Bahrain, Al Shehab (1991) examined some socio-economic factors in educational achievement in primary schools pupils; he found apparent differences among the pupils in terms of their educational achievement with reference to their socio-economic background.

In the last decades most studies show that socio-economic (SE) factors do have an effect on educational achievement in developed countries. However, this effect has seemed to be less in the Third World countries in older studies, whereas in the newer studies it is observed that there is a relationship between SES factors and educational achievement. The reasons that the socio-economic factors in previous studies seemed to be less important regarding educational achievement are: the low educational and occupational level of the family; the class structures of the family was not clearly defined; and low parental involvement, all of which can lead to low educational achievement of the children. However, in more recent years, improvements in the educational and occupational level of the parents have appeared while at the same time, the class structure of the family has become more stable and parental involvement has become



more effective. This has been due to the Third World countries opening up to the influence of European countries which has ensured change in the socio-economic situation in these countries. This in turn has improved the socio-economic situation which has had a positive effect on the educational achievement of the children.

The nature of SES factors and their effects on the educational achievement will now be examined in detail using the following criteria: occupation and education; family income; family size; home environment; ordinal position of the child; siblings achievement; parental support; parental expectation and finally, marital status of the parents.

#### **4.3.1 Parental Occupation**

Many researchers reported that the children of parents in middle- class occupations tend to have higher levels of achievement in school than children of working- class parents and that associated with this, children whose parents have had advantages and educational success tend themselves to enjoy such advantages and success (Croll 1981).

Fraser (1959) in UK noticed that: "There is a significant closer relationship between father's occupation and the child's school success" (p 51). Mc Clelland (1961) in USA, revealed that social class is a factor and that it would appear to be correlated to educational achievement. In UK Douglas, (1964) found that working class children in primary schools made less progress than children from middle class homes. Saldate (1972), in his study of Mexican-American children, tried to separate the variables influencing educational achievement. He concluded that there were no significant differences between the high and the low achievement groups in terms of mother's and father's educational level and family income, but the correlation of father's occupational status for the high achievement group was significantly higher than for the low group. Johns, (1979) in his study in UK, indicated that children of parents from higher occupational levels were encouraged to do well at school more than children whose

parents were of lower occupational levels. This means that higher status parental encouragement leads indirectly to high achievement.

A study carried out by Rodney, (1980) found that parental occupation had the most important effect upon the pupils' educational achievement. In UK Holmes (1988), in his study of success and failure in a grammar school, concluded that boys from middle class homes had higher levels of achievement than those from working class homes. In The Third World Countries, for example in Arab countries, Dawoud (1984), in Iraq found that the parental occupation had a significant effect upon the pupils' educational performance in primary schools. One possible explanation for this, according to Dawoud, was that the parents from higher occupational levels are better able to help their children and have more resources to spend on their educational needs than parents from lower occupational levels.

In conclusion, it can be said that the parents' occupational level plays a role in pupil achievement. In general, if a parent's occupational level is high this is reflected in the encouragement given to the children at home and this encouragement helps the children to perform well. Since this point is significant it is necessary to take it into account when studying the situation in Kuwait.

#### **4.3.2 Parent's Education**

This variable has been investigated by many researchers who examined the degree to which the educational level of parents affects children's achievement in school.

According to Nemzek (1940), Bara (1973) and Beasley (1980), parental education is the most important factor in terms of pupil achievement. Shuey (1956), Campbell (1951) and UNESCO (1971), all showed that the mean scores of students of the more educational parents is greater than the mean scores of student achievement of the uneducated. Brimer and Pauli (1971) in their study "Wastage in Education" found that the variables most

related to the isolation of the school from the community was parental lack of education. They added that when parents had not attended the school, they stayed illiterate and innumerate. Hundal (1972) found a strong positive correlation between the mother's educational attainment and children's educational achievement. In USA Frances (1973) in studying the effect of the mothers' education on their school child, obtained the school records of 3,583 Princeton, New Jersey Public School students ( Grades 3-12 ) and administered questionnaires to their mothers. The results showed a strong positive correlation between the mother's educational attainment and the child's IQ as well as educational achievement. The educational position of fathers was examined in England and New Zealand by Cliften (1980). He found that the educational position of fathers was more important than the educational position of mothers. In USA Eagle, Eva (1989) in his research on post-secondary students' attainment found the pervasive importance of parental education and family influence. He stated that: " These factors were key to students' post-secondary attainment, even when aspects of the home environment were taken into account". On the other hand, Hood (1967) observed that there was no major relationship between the academic achievement of children and the educational level of their mothers. In Arabic Countries, for example in Kuwait, Al- Khulaifi and Al- Shaik (1987) found that parental education had a significant effect upon the pupils' educational achievement in primary school. One possible explanation for this, according to Al- Khulaifi and Al- Shaik, was that educated parents are more capable of helping their children in their schools than uneducated parents. In Iraq Dawoud (1984) reached the same conclusions.

The previous studies indicated that parents' education had a big role in affecting children's achievement. Also, it was observed that a high educational level of parents was a significant factor in motivating and encouraging children to have high achievement. As

such it is important to carefully study these aspects in order to ascertain its effect on children's achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

#### **4.3.3 Family Income**

The correlation between family income and the educational achievement of students in school has been considered by many research workers. In USA Jencks, (1972, p138) stated in his book *Inequality* that:

“There are several possible reasons why children with economically successful parents get more credentials than children with unsuccessful parents. First, they are more likely to have a home environment in which they acquire the intellectual skills they need to do well in school. Second, they are more likely to have genes that facilitate success in school. Third, they seldom have to work or borrow money to attend college and they may feel that they ought to stay in school, even if they have no special aptitude for academic work and dislike school life. Fourth, they may attend better schools, which induce them to go to college rather than to drop out”.

In Indiana, in USA Coster (1959) studied nine high schools. He found a significant relationship between pupils' home income levels and their school progress. Ryker (1971) found that pupils' achievement was greatly affected by their family income. Maynard (1977) examined the effects of the home environment on the school performance of Black American children from inner-city, low income families. His findings suggested that educational achievement may be directly influenced by housing quality and nutrition. In Texas, Matuszek and Haskin (1978) studied second and fifth grade students and found that the most consistent indicators of lower achievement were those most traditionally used for SES: Parental income, education and job status. In the United Kingdom, Mahler (1971) concluded that students were strongly affected by family income. Banks (1973) also observed that the economic status of the father's occupation played a highly significant role in children's educational achievement. Family income has also shown to

be associated with student achievement by Bridge et al (1979). However, Bridge et al (1979) indicated that the effect is not found with achievement growth. What this implies is that students from well- to- do backgrounds have an initial advantage in academic achievement, which lasts even through high school. However, in spite of this advantage, these students may not learn any faster than students who are more economically deprived. Family income was also found to be a better predictor of academic achievement than gender and family configuration for children in grades 2 through 4 (Patterson, Kupersmidt & Vaden, 1990). Menacker (1990) in USA studied standardized test scores of children in Chicago Public Schools and concluded that income level is the most critical factor contributing to achievement differences irrespective of ethnic and radical backgrounds of children. Kraig (1989) also found family income a significant factor in explaining differences in children's educational achievement.

In The Third World Countries in parallel studies undertaken in Thailand, Cochrane and Jamison (1982) found that the parental landholding ( an indicator of wealth ) was the most important predictor of their daughter's educational attainment. In Arab countries, Fernandos and Al- Shadhir (1971) in Iraq found that the economic situation of the family was an important variable. However, in the same country, Yakuob (1979) found no significant difference between the family income of high and under achievement of fifth grade primary school children. One of the reasons for the difference between the results of Yakuob and Fernandes and Al- Shadhir is that the nature of the sample undertaken in the two studies was different. The sample of Fernandos and Al-Shadhir included information from all Iraqi governorates, but the sample of Yakoub included only one governorate, which seemed to be a rural one. Thus, the results of the two studies were different. In Sudan, Ahmed (1982) found that children of poorer parents tended to have better achievement than children of richer parents. One possible explanation for this, according to Ahmed, was that deprived children might have a stronger motivation to

work hard in order to change their unsatisfactory situation. In Kuwait, Al- Rasheed (1987) found a significant relationship between the socio-economic background of the family and the performance of the pupils in schools. One possible explanation of these results is that families with high income are more able to help regarding their children's education than families with low income.

In the previous studies it can be observed that family income had a role in providing a good study environment, full of suitable incentives and, at the same time, a good income ensured many of the necessities for academic success. In some studies the low influence of the family income factor on achievement was because of poor sampling which did not represent the whole society, and the general lack of the inclusion of socio-economic factors of the society. This of course affected the research results. Hence, it is necessary to take this aspect into account in order to ascertain its effects on children's achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

#### **4.3.4 Family Size**

The relationship between family size and educational achievement has been investigated in many studies. Early on Fraser (1959), in Britain, found a significant relationship between family size and achievement in school. Douglas (1964) and Clifford (1983) found that students from large families were less successful than those from small families. Ryker (1971) concluded that over- crowded housing conditions were closely associated with poor educational achievement. Research carried out by Bara (1973) in Washington investigated the achievement of sixth grade pupils. The main objective of this study was to examine selected socio-cultural factors and to relate these to reading achievement. He found a significant correlation between family size and achievement in favour of the small family.

Nuttal et al (1976) indicated that birth order and family size are the two most important factors that affected pupils' educational achievement in school. In another study by Hutchinson, et al (1979) attention was drawn to the way that poor accommodation and family size are a feature of poorer social classes, and are associated with poor levels of educational achievement. On the other hand, in the UK Banks (1973) found that there was no relationship between family size and achievement. While in U.S.A. Cicirelli, (1976) in his study showed that total family size may play a role. He found that children from large ( three or more siblings) families received more explanations and verbalizations from older siblings in a teaching task and engaged in more help-seeking and help accepting behaviours than children from small ( two children) families. This means that interactions between siblings may play a role in increasing information exchange between them which in turn help them to achieve better in school. However, this is true only if those siblings have high achievement and good behaviour to benefit each other.

In Arab countries, Aly (1979), in Egypt, found a significant relationship between student achievement and socio-economic background in terms of parental education, occupation and family size. In Iraq, Dawoud (1984) found an important relationship between family size and achievement at school. Dawoud said that children from small families tended to have a better academic status because a small number of children means that they have more time with their parents in the home compared with the amount of time available for each child in families with a large number of children.

The aforementioned studies showed that a small family size was conducive to creating a positive home environment in contrast to a large family in which noise and disputes might occur more frequently. A large number of siblings could negatively affect the child's achievement while a small number of siblings allowed the parents to provide more interest and care for their children, thus reflecting positively on their children's

achievement. However, few studies demonstrated that the existence of interactions between high achiever siblings in large families may have positive effects on children's achievement. The strength of such findings makes it important to consider family size when studying the Kuwait situation.

#### **4.3.5 Home Environment**

The effect of the home environment on students' educational achievement has long been discussed. In the early days Fraser (1959) carried out an important British investigation into the inter-relationship between intelligence and achievement among over 408 Aberdeen school children who were transferred from primary schools to ten different secondary schools and who were studied from the age of 12 1/2 to 13 1/2. Fraser's study aimed to specify to what extent the school progress of a child was associated with factors in his home environment , and aimed to compare this correlation with that existing between the home environment and intelligence. Personal interviews with parents were undertaken to assess the material, cultural and attitudinal aspects of the home background. Scaled school grades were used as the most important criterion of scholastic achievement. The conclusions of the study indicated that the home environment was more clearly associated with school achievement than with intelligence. In the UK Banks (1973) also found that there was a relationship between the home environment and students' educational achievement in school. In the USA Kenelm (1974) indicated that children from middle class homes had significantly higher IQ's and achievement than children from lower class homes. Marjoribanks (1987) and Bybee (1982) indicated that the family may act as a critical substratum variable that influences the relations between children's attitudinal and cognitive attributes and their academic performance. In the USA Mc Gowan and Johnson (1984) did research with Mexican-American pre-school children and indicated that early intellectual stimulation, and the quality of the home



environment, contributed to the children's success. In the USA also Marjoribanks (1987) and Soto (1986) noted the substantial contribution of the home environment to school achievement. Recently in USA Peng (1994) found in his study that home environments and educational activities are important factors of student academic achievement. Some studies have also indicated that there is a relationship between the quality of the home and students' performance. For example, Roy (1950) found an increase in permissiveness of child-rearing attitudes as the number of rooms in the house increased. Hoffman (1984) and Wachs (1979) found in their study that the ratio of rooms to people in the home was more predictive of performance than was the number of people. He suggested that the child's having " a personal space" for shelter from stimulation was important for development. A study by Metcalfe (1950) demonstrated the following "The provision of ( good) books in the home proved a significant factor for academic progress".(p. 63). Cohen, et al (1973) found that more second to fifth grade children living near the noise of street traffic on the lower floors of a 32 storey building experienced reading disorders than did children in the same building living on the upper floors away from traffic noise. Keeves (1972) found a significant relationship between parents' ambitions and the so-called " cultural" home where books were widely used and homework was considered important. Lee and Croninger (1994) pointed out that the availability of reading material in the home, whether owned or borrowed from the library, is directly associated with children's achievement in reading comprehension. Other studies have been interested in studying some of the affective factors inside the home for example, the effect of TV on the educational achievement. Williams et al (1982) found evidence that viewing television up to 10 hours per week had a positive impact on achievement, but that viewing more than 10 hours per week had a negative impact. Comstock (1982) quoting studies conducted by the California Assessment Programs, 1980 and by Zelland Paterson, 1981 noted a negative relationship between the

amount of time students spent watching television and their achievement in reading, mathematics, and writing expression. These studies also showed that scores declined on each test of the three individual subject areas as viewing time increased. Walberg (1986) reported similar findings when he synthesized research studies of factors believed to influence student learning. In the United States Dornbusch (1987) found higher levels of television viewing have been associated with slightly lower grades at school. In international studies of achievement, heavy television viewing has been found to be related to somewhat lower achievement in science and mathematics in Canada, Ireland, South Korea, Spain, the United States, and the United Kingdom (Lapointe, Mead, and Phillips, 1988) and to lower reading achievement in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland, New Zealand, and the United States (Elley, 1992). On the other hand Smith (1992) found that growth in mathematics achievement tends to be positively associated with time spent watching television among students with parents in lower-status occupation compared with TV time among those with higher status parents. However, it is clear that Smith's study concentrated on mathematics achievement only, which means that there might be some differences when studying achievement in general.

Some studies have been interested in studying the effect of family background including the traditions and relationships on achievement. Goodacre (1968) saw the home background and other student characteristics as being the most significant factor in explaining student learning outcomes. Findings by Nuttal et al (1976) and Sizemore (1972) showed that the family factor has important effects on school achievement. Another study conducted in the USA by Crain (1972) examined the effects of family background on educational performance in Oklahoma city schools. The results of this study found that white students in the Southern States had lower levels of performance than the white students in Northern ones, and that was in accord with their family

background. Benson (1979) examined a sample of 1007 children to establish the relationship between educational achievement and the following variables: socio-economic status of the family, mobility, and classroom adjustment. The results of this study showed that educational achievement was negatively associated with mobility, but that educational achievement was positively associated with the socio-economic status of the family. Recently, Cuttance (1992) reported that achievement was significantly greater for students from more affluent home backgrounds, when compared with students from poorer homes. In this British study Cuttance asserts that any analysis of the effectiveness of school needs to be adjusted for the social background and prior attainment of students. Young and Fraser (1992 a, 1992 b ) and Keeves and Morgenstern ( 1992) clearly showed that measures of attitude towards science was a useful explanatory variable in the investigation of science achievement, while home background and average school home background are the most powerful factors explaining overall student academic performance.

Other studies have focused on the role of the internal activities and behaviour of the family on achievement. Kalinowski & Sloane, (1981) wrote, " What parents do rather than who they are is the more important determinant of the home's influence on the child's achievement" (p.93). Datcher-Loury (1988) found evidence that much of the variation in academic performance of young children from low-income black families results from differences in behaviour and attitudes among the families. Amato and Ochiltree (1986) found that the frequency of family activities such as outings, playing games together, and talking about television programmes was significantly correlated with reading test scores for a representative sample of primary school children. Scott-Jones (1987) also found that high-readiness children were often involved in the selection of activities, self-initiated questions and statements, play, and free time activities. Soto (1990) wrote that, " Families can serve as educators for their children by providing

activities and facilitating learning at home. The home learning environment or process variables present in the home can help to enhance children's school achievement" (p 4). Other studies have been interested in the quality of the regulation and the authority inside the family. Epstein and Mc Partland (1977) wrote " the students with less regulation at home .. are less positive towards school, less likely to fulfill school-task demands, and less well-adjusted" (p 23). Dornbusch (1987) surveyed over 7000 high school students to investigate family disciplinary practices, categorized according to Baumrind's typology of disciplinary styles: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. The authoritative style, was found to be positively associated with grades. In the USA Slaughter and Epps (1987) reported a study by Clark in which families of successfully achieving black high students were found to provide firm, but not rigid or harsh, discipline; this was done from observations of parents and adolescents while discussing tasks. Portes (1986) also found that harsher parental measures were negatively correlated with reading and language scores.

Epstein and Mc Partland (1977) noted shared- authority has been positively related to school coping skills. Shared authority has been found to encourage more self reliance and a sense of control of environment. The highly parent-dominated home encouraged less independence and discouraged self- reliance and self expression. Such behaviour was perceived as being defiant or rebellious and was usually punished. On the other hand, a home which accepted and encouraged a child's input into family decisions, offered opportunities for shared control and shared authority. Other studies have been interested in Rewards and Punishment inside the family. In USA Lens (1993) indicated that most students, even those with a strong intrinsic motivation, are more highly motivated by extrinsic rewards and goals. Deci and Ryan (1985) indicated that rewards strengthen perceptions and feelings of competence, enhancing the intrinsic motivation. In The Third World Countries, Al-Shaikh (1989) mentioned that a mother from the middle classes has

the ability to create hopes for her children and she feels she can have an effect on their performance to help them get a high achievement level, whereas a mother who has low education feels that she has little effect on her children's performance, so she tries to use bodily beating because she thinks that this method will have more effect on her children.

An important fact of the home which has interested many researchers is peer group influences. Gordon (1975) found that peers are especially powerful mechanisms in controlling adolescent behaviour, particularly in school improvement. Johnson (1981) and Hartup (1978) both asserted that peers do influence each other in many important modes of behaviour, including aspirations, achievement, values and attitudes, social skills, and appropriate sex roles. Krappman (1992) and Youniss (1980) found that children learn through peer interaction because it introduces them to the possibilities of cooperative activity. Pontecorvo (1993) provided evidence that peer tutoring is particularly effective for increasing knowledge acquisition in the peer tutors. Larson (1983) found that high school students' time spent with friends was associated with greater school absenteeism and lower academic performance, and lower teacher ratings of intellectual involvement in class. Damon (1989), indicated that children learn through peer interaction because it introduces them to the possibilities of cooperative activity.

From the above it seems that the home environment has many aspects that affect achievement. Graham (1993) noted in these words the effect of the home environment on achievement: " Today we would probably observe that many of the children in the progressive schools came from homes and communities in which there were many powerful and effective educational activities engaging them... The same assumption,

however, was certainly not true for those children who did not have a rich educational environment outside the schools"(p.84).

The previous studies discussed different factors that clearly affect students' achievement. These factors include the nature of the home such as, the nature of rooms, and the amount of quiet time, as well as the existence of cultural stimulation as represented by a library and good books, and the influence of the TV and video. The studies indicated that the quality of internal authority in the home also influenced the children's achievement. In addition, the studies indicated the important role of discussion and dialogue between the family members in children's achievement.

It was clear that the studies carried out in the developed countries concentrated on factors inside the family itself, indicating that such factors were of great significance in student achievement and should therefore be studied in order to give a more complete picture of student success or failure. In the previous studies in that field it was clear that family life, including activities and experiences, was different from one society to another and could differ from sub-group to sub-group concerning ideas, behaviours, and experiences. This led us to conclude that life in Kuwaiti families might be different due to differences of opinions and behaviours resulting from differences in the socio-economic situation. This in turn may affect educational achievement. This required giving attention to the several aspects that exist in the Kuwaiti family. However, the researcher noted from previous studies that there was a clear shortage of studies on the home environment in Arab Islamic societies, especially in Arabian Gulf societies. The reasons for this deficiency could be that firstly, researchers might be afraid that family members may not cooperate with them, especially in matters concerned with traditions, for example, speaking with women or giving private information to an unknown person; and secondly that the nature of studying the home environment would require more effort and time.

#### **4.3.6 Ordinal Position and Siblings' Achievement**

The correlation between birth order and educational achievement has been considered by many research workers. However, while some studies have provided evidence that birth order affects educational achievement, other studies have shown no effects. Lees and Stewart (1957) said that the first born is often successful because he/she has a capacity for loneliness. In the USA Sampson (1962) indicated that first born males, at least, are inclined to greater social conforming : they fall into line more readily when rewards are offered and are more susceptible to social pressures. They also have a stronger need for achievement than later- born children. First-born girls, on the other hand, showed a greater independence than later- born children. Nuttal et al (1976) found that first born girls had higher academic achievement than did later born girls. Upton (1978) stated that " the weight of evidence seems to support a connection between birth order and behaviour disturbance." (p 195). In New York Hetherington (1979) found that children born later tend to have lower IQs than those born earlier. He showed that parents have a limited amount of time available for their later children. On the other hand, Schoaler, (1972) found that birth order has only a slight effect on educational achievement. Lahey, et al (1980) in their study showed that the effect of birth order may be moderated by other demographic variables. In fact, when we see the different cultures throughout the countries we will find that the children are often treated differently as a result of their birth order (Gardner,1982) . Studies in less developed countries, (for example, Blount (1971) in Kenya) identified older siblings as significant models and sources of evaluation for younger children. In Kenya Nkinyangi (1980) in a study of primary school achievement showed that children who repeated or dropped out were twice as likely as their successful peers to have had brothers who had repeated. Hughes. (1989) stated that " Brothers and sisters have a profound effect on the education of each other. In many families, older children have substantial roles in the raising and training of their younger

siblings".( p 62). In Arab Countries there has been little study of siblings' achievement and ordinal position factors.

The above studies show clearly that the ordinal position of the child has a role in her/his achievement. A first child, for example, has a greater opportunity of having more contact with her/his parents and this extra contact reflects on her/his achievement. The previous studies also mentioned the influence of siblings' achievement on brothers and sisters.

Thus, both these considerations of child position in the family need to be included in our study of Kuwait.

#### **4.3.7 Parental Involvement or Support**

In early studies Floud et al (1956) stated that " At all social levels, and in socially contrasted areas, children tend to be more successful in the eleven-plus examinations if they have parents who have discussed their future with the primary school teacher and would prefer them to stay at school until eighteen" (p.102). In the UK Douglas (1964) found that parental interest played a highly significant role in children's educational achievement at school. Pidgeon (1961) suggested that motivational factors in the home background, such as consistent interest shown by parents, is of more importance to achievement than the more fixed material and economic conditions. Kalinowski and Sloane (1981) pointed out that " Parental involvement refers to parents' interests, motivation and involvement in providing experiences in the home that are conducive to the child's achievement in school" (p.93). The quality of this involvement and interaction with a caring adult was important in improving a child's achievement. Ronnell (1984) and Calahan (1987) each reported significant achievement results when parents were involved in home programmes in a supervisory capacity. Further weighty evidence has been accumulated to show that success in school is positively related to parental involvement in the child's schooling ( Epstein 1984 and Fehrmann et al, 1987) : However,



in the USA a study by Eagle, Eva, (1989) pointed out that only parental involvement during high school was of significant impact when social background factors were controlled. Brooks (1989) found that of the two dimensions of parental involvement, socialization and teaching, socialization was the greater contributor to achievement. Some studies indicated the effect of the high SES of the family on its involvement with the children. Stevenson and Baker (1987) pointed out that parents in high socio-economic families are more likely to be involved with their children's education than are parents in low socio-economic families, as evidenced by parental participation with schools and teachers. Such involvement improves their children's educational achievement. Other studies indicated that parents' involvement affected many aspects of educational achievement, such as motivation. Ford (1992) and Marchant (1991) stated that achievement motivation is an important mediator of academic performance differences in inner-city school populations. Findings generally indicate that minority children exhibiting higher achievement motivation perform better academically than students with lower achievement motivation (Broderick and Sewell, 1985 and Sewell and Price 1991). Other studies indicated that the role of the family interest in visiting the school helped to increase achievement. Gesten, et al (1978) studied the school adjustment problems of primary school students and their relationship with parental interest in education. Their conclusion indicated that students from homes characterized by low parent interest in education had more severe learning problems and fewer competencies than children from homes with family pressure to succeed. Craft (1974) in his book 'Family Class and Education' mentioned that "There is no doubt that those who visit the school often and wish their children to enjoy a selective and protracted education in general give a boost to their children's educational progress". Henderson & Berla (1994) pointed out that families who are consistently informed about their children's progress at school have higher-achievement children. A study by Myers (1983) in the United State of America

pointed out that where children had parents who showed increased concern for their educational achievement they tended to have more positive results and that sub-groups make little difference. In the USA Phillips (1992) investigated the relationships between student achievement and parental expectations, goals, education and socialization activities, and formal school involvement. The findings indicated that achievement, but not achievement gain, was strongly related to parent conference attendance and parents' willingness to volunteer. Recently Leung (1993) found that parental valuing and concern for schoolwork and positive feelings about good school performance were found to correlate positively with adolescents' attitudes toward schoolwork. Fejgin (1995) examines factors that contribute to the academic excellence of Jewish and Asian students. He found that traditional socio-economic measures explain some of the advantage of Jewish and Asian students over other ethnic groups but that parent and student attitudes toward education is also an important factor.

Other studies considered family encouragement as one aspect of involvement which affect achievement. In the USA Seginer (1983) found in his study that middle-class parents continue to encourage their children to have high educational expectations even when the children get low marks. On the other hand, Lareau (1987) noticed that lower-class parents are more likely to be discouraged and discouraging when their children's marks are poor. One reason for this is that lower-class parents are more likely to accept the authority of the school and the feedback about their children as exact, even when it is negative. With regard to the effect of personal involvement on student's achievement, Massey (1987) indicated that a child who has had the opportunity to feel in control realised that there were results of her/his actions. This child gained a sense of power which was translated in the school setting by the child manipulating her/his environment. In the USA Reynolds (1989), Diaz-Soto (1989), and Snodgrass (1991) found that children whose parents had expectations of them and were more involved in their academic

activities exhibited higher achievement than children whose parents were less involved in their academic activities. Sigrid (1994) reached the same conclusions.

Another study focussed on the time that the family spends with the children as an aspect of involvement. Leibowitz (1977) found that parents improve their children's academic achievement by spending more time with their children in pursuit of activities that aid cognitive development or the formation of human capital. Larson (1983), in an intensive study of 75 high school students, found a tendency toward a positive association between time spent with the family and school performance and involvement.

On the other hand, Smith (1990), found no association between academic achievement and time spent with parents in a sample of 1584 seventh and ninth graders. He argued that the important factor is what the parents do during their time with children, not the amount of time spent. It was observed from the contradiction arising from these two results that researchers has their own analysis which tended to be a function of the sample used in the study, the number included in the sample and the different environment.

Other studies have been interested in studying the aspect of homework. Here again there was a contradiction in the results due to the same reasons stated previously as well as being due to the difference in the importance of the homework in affecting achievement from one stage to another and from one society to another. Early on Goldstein (1960) said that homework seems: to lead to higher achievement; to be more useful and important at higher grade levels than lower ones; to benefit some students, but not others; and last, to have no negative psychological effects on students. Herzog (1994), found that the most important thing that parents can do to help children succeed in school are listening and talking with them, encouraging them with homework, helping them perceive themselves as capable problem solvers.

Considerable research has found a positive relationship between amounts of homework and academic achievement. ( Keith et al, 1986 and Leone and Richards, 1989). Walberg, et al (1986) found that the number of hours of homework per week was one of the most consistent predictors of achievement in maths.

However, another review disputed the idea that achievement is accelerated by homework and concluded that there was little evidence available for making any conclusions concerning the relationship between homework and achievement (Mulry 1961). Smith (1990) also failed to find a significant association between academic achievement and homework time as reported in his study of seventh and ninth graders. He argued that the association found in the twelfth grade in previous research might not appear before high school. That line of argument would predict an interaction between year in school and homework time, with an increase in academic achievement between the ninth and eleventh grades positively related to time spent on homework ( positively because of its association with academic course work in high schools, but with no association in the seventh-to-ninth-grade period). Cool and Keith (1991) concluded after a new analysis of the data from high school and beyond seniors, that most of the effect of homework time was spurious, since it disappeared with academic course work was included in the analysis.

In the third world countries research has also been done concerning parental involvement. In Kenya Eshiwani (1983) examined the performance of pupils from western Province schools, and identified active Parent Teacher Associations as an important element of school quality. Another study conducted in Kenya by Kathuri (1984) examined the performance of students from 49 primary schools on the 1981 CPE exam. Kathuri observed that, in the final analysis it seems that it is the indirect influence and high expectations of parents on their children that seems to matter. The parents in the

high socio-economic bracket are able to provide both support, and bring pressure to bear on teachers, so that they do their best. Gakuru, et al (1987) also found parental involvement to be a critical factor or affecting school quality. In the Arab countries in Egypt, Turkey (1974) in his study found that parental involvement has positive effect on children's achievement.

It can be concluded that parental involvement includes many aspects, such as, showing an interest in education, providing a level of cultural stimulation inside the home, motivating children towards high achievement, supervising homework and spending enough time with the children. All of these factors are important and should be taken into account when studying children's achievement in order to obtain a clear picture of the child's internal environment and then analyse how these aspects affect her/his achievement. In other words, a study of these factors will help to give a clear picture of parental involvement and this picture will facilitate the study of the effect of these aspects on children's achievement.

#### **4.3.8 Parental Aspirations and Expectations**

The aspirations and expectations that parents have for the educational achievement of their children have been mentioned by many researchers. These aspirations and expectations can manifest themselves in many different forms and at varying degrees. Early on Pidgeon (1961) found that one of the main factors that influenced the academic achievement of students in school was the attitude of the students' parents towards education. In contrast, however, Crandall et al (1964) found few relationships between parent's attitudes and the educational performance of boys in second to fourth grades. In the 1970's in Britain, Osborn (1971) indicated that the great variation in pupils' achievement was due to parental attitudes rather than to the material circumstances of homes. A study carried out by Marjoribanks (1976) found a high correlation between

parents' educational and occupational expectations and verbal and mathematics achievement of students. Maccoby and Jaklin (1974) indicated that a student's achievement and performance were influenced by their parents' attitudes towards education. Scott-Jones (1982) showed that the precision of mothers' expectations was highly correlated with the child's performance on cognitive tasks. Mothers whose expectations were most precise, that is, nearest to the child's real performance, had children with the highest marks on the cognitive tasks. The best situation may be for parental expectations to be not simply high in an absolute sense but near to the child's real performance level.

Many studies concentrated on the motivational effect of aspirations on student's achievement. Marjoribanks (1983) found that parental aspirations were significantly related to the academic achievement but only for the professional class, not the working or intermediate classes, in her sample of eleven-year old. Whereas, Kahl ( cited in Boocock, 1980) found parental aspiration to be not necessarily linked to socio-economic status, but associated with strong parental desire to either maintain a status quo or to encourage the child to move to a higher social class. In the USA Seginer (1983) found that middle-class parents continue to encourage their children to have high educational expectations even when the children receive low grades. Lower class parents, however are more likely to be discouraged and discouraging when their children's grades are poor, ( Lareau 1987).

In the USA Clark (1983) in his book " Family Life and School Achievement", studied high achievement students from poor American families. He found from their parental beliefs and values that in spite of social hardships and barriers, which often tend to limit achievement and social advancement, this group of parents must have had high aspirations and high expectations of their children in order to encourage them to pursue high levels of education. Prom- Jackson (1987) reached the same findings. In the UK

Holmes, (1988) in his study "Success and Failure" states that: " It is clear that when the hopes of working class parents for their child fuse with the child's innate ability, then that child will rapidly forge ahead as well as any child from the middle classes in a similar situation". (p. 153-154). Early in the 1990's, in the USA Soto (1990) carried out a study which included interviewing and observing 59 families from groups of lower achieving and higher achieving students. The results showed that in the lower achievers' homes the parents had lower expectations of educational achievement, and they were often more permissive with their children. In the homes of higher achievers the parents at all times knew the whereabouts of their child, and they had higher expectations for their child's educational achievement. Recently Saha (1993) and Peng (1994), reached the same conclusions.

Studies in other countries have shown that parental aspirations have a considerable effect on differences in students' educational achievement. For example, in Malaysia Noordin (1978) observed that parents are more likely to be satisfied with a lower standard of educational performance. For his sample of pupils, then, parental expectations for their children are clearly low, thus providing no stronger incentive for the Malaysian pupils to pursue a high target. In Kenya, Nkinyangi (1980) indicated in his study that: " Parents of repeaters and dropouts had lower career aspirations for their children than did parents of successful children". (p. 267). In Sri Lanka, Niles (1981), in his study of urban tenth-grade students, indicated that a family's social class ( parental occupation and education), parents' interest in their child's performances, and parental aspirations were strongly associated with the students' achievement. In Thailand, Cochrane and Jamison (1982) found that parents' aspirations for their children's education was the most important predictor of the educational achievement of their children. In Peninsular Malaysia, Waite, Rindfuss and De Tray (1986) examined a model of mothers' expectations for the eventual educational achievement of their young children. Their results suggested that

mothers attempt to transfer education directly to their progeny through their expectations for their children's schooling. Mothers who have little or no education indicated that they also want their children to achieve the highest level of education.

In the Arab countries, there have been few similar studies. For example, in Egypt Shoeib (1982) found a strong relationship between the educational achievement of children and parents' aspirations with regards to schooling.

From the previous studies in this field it is clear that parents' aspirations, behaviour and expectations all have a significant effect on their children's achievement. In the case of parents who had high aspirations and expectations and positive behaviour these factors were not only a mirror for their children's high aspirations and expectations but were also considered to be a main instrument in motivating the children to achieve the same high level of aspirations and expectations as their parents. The opposite was true concerning the parents who had low aspirations and expectations. The high aspirations and expectations of parents also had a basic role in creating an atmosphere conducive to discussion both between the parents and their children. Such discussion enabled the parents to learn about their children's problems and to surmount any difficulties that might hamper the realization of their children's aspirations. This helped the children to attain high achievement. Hence, it can be seen that it is essential to include in the Kuwaiti study, information about the aspirations and expectations of the parents in order to see how this affects children's achievement.

#### **4.3.9 Parental Marital Status**

Holmes (1988) states that: " The variable emotional climate of the home, is a more subjective variable. It has been included here because it seemed to me that there were aspects of home life associated with emotional disturbance at home which could potentially influence a child's performance". (p.116). Other authors such as Fraser (1959)



early on found that an abnormal home background was significant in lowering the attainment level, even when intelligence had been allowed for. Dale and Griffiths (1965), in their study, indicated that severe emotional discord can occur where there is separation or divorce between parents or there is a serious illness of one in the family. Where this discord takes place in the family, there may be a critical influence on the children in that family. Studies carried out by Shinn (1978) and Hetherington (1981) concluded that children from one-parent families score lower on cognitive measures than do children from two-parent families. However, in contrast, Brackbill and Nichols (1982) found no support for theory's confluence that children in single-parent homes would perform more poorly than those in two-parent homes. Again however, according to Burns & Brassard (1982) and Black. et al (1981) the psychological distress and pain created by divorce had a definite impact on the family and affected both the quality and quantity of parent-child interaction. Schneewind (1993) found that strained couple relationships and inter-parental conflict seemed to have a negative impact on children's personality development. In Kuwait the Ministry of Education (1984) indicated that parental separation which arises from divorce and remarriage to another wife is one of the most important reasons for students' failure in the school.

From the previous studies it is clear that marital status, like divorce or single parent families, has a role in affecting the children's educational achievement. Thus, it is important to include an analysis of such factors when studying children's achievement in Kuwait. Such information about the effect of marital changes in the family could be significant, especially when those changes are concerned with special characteristics of Islamic Societies such as polygamy.

#### **4.4 Discussion and Conclusion**

From the literature review, it appears that socio-economic factors have a direct relationship with the student's educational achievement. Moreover, these factors vary in their impact and their degree of influence according to the differences between societies. The effect of socio-economic factors in educational achievement in developed countries has been very clearly shown through the last decade. By contrast, studies in less developed countries showed that these factors had lesser effects on educational achievement in earlier studies but in recent years some studies have shown an increasing effect of socio-economic factors on educational achievement for example Smith and Cheung (1986) and Maundu (1988) in Kenya.

There are many reasons for differences between developed and undeveloped countries. First, there is the different importance of the variables from one society to another. For example, the effect of socio-economic factors appears to be more influential in developed countries when class structures are clearly defined, when formal school is highly institutionalised and when academic subjects are familiar to parents' own knowledge. On the other hand, when the school is in marked contrast to the home and family environment and teaches unfamiliar areas of knowledge, such as a rural school providing science instruction, individual school factors appear to be more powerful than socio-economic factors. Second, differences in social class in societies and differences in social class have been found to affect children's performance. Most studies of family background characteristics in developed countries have employed two indicators of social class: parents' educational attainment and parents' occupational status. In Third World settings there may be little variation in education or occupation: in many cases the educational levels of adults are uniformly low, and occupations are preponderantly

related to rural agricultural, at least in the lowest income countries ( Heyneman and Loxley, 1983).

Beside the above reasons there are other reasons for the contradictory findings in the literature review. First, there is a difference in the measurements used in studies: the socio-economic differences show up most clearly in those output measurements which require linguistic manipulation, and less clearly in subjects like mathematics.

Schiefelbein and Simmons (1981) found that social class significantly helped predict the achievement of students in 28 of the 37 Third World studies they reviewed. Moreover, family background may be salient for familiar subjects, such as reading, but less so for subjects that are relatively less familiar to many third world communities, such as science. The researcher noted that student family characteristics accounted for a higher proportion of variance in reading achievement than in science achievement in multivariate studies from India, Malaysia, and Peru. Secondly, there are difficulties in methodology: the variables used in previous studies are interconnected. Gilbert & Kahl (1982) found out that " Both the average education and the average income of those who worked in various occupations were highly correlated with the prestige scores of the occupations. Education and income are both functionally and temporarily related to occupations. Education is the necessary preparation for entering an occupation" (pp.46-47). According to Bond (1981) educational level, occupation, and income are major indicators on which to measure socio-economic status. In fact, the difficulties in distinguishing between interactive variables statistically or socially may lead to contradictory findings.

The previous studies concentrated on the importance of studying the family itself and of taking the information from its original source while taking into account the triangulation in obtaining the information. Also it was clear that there are many factors that should be studied when investigating the socio-economic factors of the family. It is not only

important to study parents' education, parents' occupation, family size, and family income but also it is important to study factors inside the family, such as, the nature of the relationship between the father and the mother, marital status of parents, the relationship between the parents and their children, the nature of the home involvement which includes the home contents, the quality of internal cultural incentives, the quality of the authority used in the home, and the quality of interest, the influence of the peers and siblings and ordinal position of the child, the nature of parents' involvement and support inside and outside the home (which includes motivating effects, encouragement, interest in homework and giving enough time to children), parents' aspirations and expectations, and the relationship between the home and the school. It is important to study all these factors in order to obtain a clear picture of the nature of the internal environment of the family. This will facilitate analysis of the reasons for students' achievement levels.

But before we turn to the explanation of educational differences in performance of Kuwaiti pupils in intermediate schools, we need to ascertain that there is something to explain. For this reason this study begins with a statistical analysis of educational performance which attempts to control the effect of the major SES variables discussed. The study can then be targetted more accurately on unpicking some of these factors in a qualitative way.

Such methods will in turn help to obtain in depth information about the children, allowing the researcher to obtain an inclusive picture of the most influential factors on children's achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

From the literature review it seems that the true influence of socio-economic factors on educational achievement can be estimated better if one firstly takes into account family background and parental values, and secondly uses better indicators of the material and social aspects of class. The researcher noticed that the few studies which had been done

in Kuwait, may not take the above two important points into account, which then leads to problems in interpreting the findings. In this study, we will try to determine which, and to what extent, the factors identified by previous researchers affect the educational achievement of pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **5.1 Introduction:**

The methodology used in this piece of research to investigate the influence of socio-economic factors on educational achievement was chosen specifically for use in Kuwait. After an investigation of previous studies in this area, it was decided that the best way to tackle this research problem was to make a statistical analysis of which socio-economic factors appeared to be influencing students' educational achievement and then to study how these factors operated inside the home environment using a more qualitative approach. The approach made it necessary to carry out a preliminary study in Kuwait in the field, in order to gain enough information to carry out the main study. A pilot study was carried out in August 1991 to obtain this preliminary information. The pilot study had several facets. It included visiting many educational locations, examining numbers of pupils files, carrying out interviews and observations with teachers, social specialists, students and parents. The pilot study allowed the construction of a very focused research strategy, including determining the research's questions, and general information about the main sample to be used in the main study. The pilot study also provided the opportunity to design the research instruments which consisted of:-

- a. A student's questionnaire.
- b. Interviews in depth for students, parents, teachers and social specialists.

In October 1992 the research's methodology and instruments were presented to research staff at Bath University as a part of seminar. Their observations and recommendations were taken into account. In the middle of October 1992 the research instruments were presented to a group of specialists at Kuwait University's Education College to investigate the validity of the research instruments. This was followed by tests in homes and schools to further investigate the reliability and

validity of the instruments. After these investigations the research instruments took their final shape. In December 1992 the main study was carried out and information was collected from students' files using the questionnaire, all this took two months. In February 1993 two months were spent interviewing students and parents in their homes and also conducting interviews with teachers and social specialists. Finally deviant cases were examined during the period early April to the end of May 1993. In this chapter an inclusive picture of the development of the methodology for this research, and the logical steps taken to formulate the methodology will be given together with the steps taken at every stage to investigate the reliability and validity of the research (see Figure 4.1 at the end of this chapter).

## **5.2 Review of Possible Research Methodologies:**

In the USA Soto (1988 ) conducted a study which compared the home learning environment of higher achieving and lower achieving mainland Puerto Rican fifth and sixth graders. Statistically significant differences were found favouring higher achieving home learning environments on six out of eight subscales. Soto (1988) recommends detailed observational home environment research, as well as an emphasis on successful higher achieving ethnically diverse learners.

In 1990 Soto (1990) carried out a study which identified home environment factors that may contribute to children's academic achievement. The study involved observing and interviewing families of a group of higher achieving and lower achieving fifth and sixth grade students of Puerto Rican descent residing in Southeastern urban Pennsylvania .Mini-case studies are presented to illustrate the differing family life situations .

Stenhouse (1988) found the recoil from the statistical-experimental paradigm has been towards the qualitative and towards the idea of case -study.

In the last 25 years educational research has begun to borrow research techniques from the social sciences. A more qualitative style of research has been adopted, entailing something of a move away from quantitative research. In addition, no simple direct causal link is established by research which merely confirms an association; and no amount of sophisticated statistical operation can take the debate any further. Ethnography, on the other hand can examine a number of possible processes which help explain the relationship. Thus the researcher decided to conduct a statistical analysis to study the effect of socio-economic factors on the educational achievement and determine the key variables. The study can then be targetted more accurately on unpicking some of these factors in a qualitative way.

### **5.3 Pilot Study:**

In August 1991, the researcher conducted his pilot study. The aims of the pilot study were as follows:

- To check the socio-economic factors that may affect the educational achievement of intermediate school pupils in Kuwait , by interviewing students, headmasters, teachers, social specialists, and parents.
- To examine some pupils' files in schools in order to obtain information about the backgrounds of pupils.
- To determine the final scope of the main study.

This was done by visiting four schools (two males and two females) in four different regions.

In order to investigate the aims of the pilot study the work was divided into three lines. First of all, visiting different educational locations to develop a close understanding of all factors of the research's problems and its dimensions. Secondly, the examination of students' files to study the effects of the socio-economic factors



on the educational achievement of the students. Finally, the interviews which were used to gain insight into the problem's dimensions in depth by recognising the socio-economic situation of the student, family background, relationships and behaviours inside the family and determining how these relationships operate in the home environment and in turn how they affect the educational achievement of the student.

### **5.3.1 Visiting Different Locations:**

The researcher visited :

- Information Center ( Ministry of Education State of Kuwait)
- Education Development Center (Kuwait University)
- Educational Researches Center (Ministry of Education State of Kuwait)
- Educational Researches Center of Arabian Gulf States (State of Kuwait)

#### **5.3.1.1 The aims of these visits were :**

- \_ to make a critical analysis of the available documents about Kuwaiti education in general (policies, plans ), and the effects of socio-economic factors in educational achievement in particular .
- \_ to gather information on the effects of socio-economic factors in educational achievement .

From these visits and other studies concerned with the research's problem, the researcher reached the conclusion that although many studies recommended the importance of in depth studies, to discover the effects of the socio-economic factors on educational achievement in general, very little work had been done in this field. The research that had been done tried to study the effects of the socio-economic factors on educational achievement by statistical analysis. Consequently, these

research projects did not try to formulate a clear plan to determine the key factors that have a major influence on educational achievement, by studying the family and the effects of these factors in the home environment. Also, the researcher found that in spite of the huge budget spent by the government, in the field of education, the Ministry of Education still faced many problems. The most important problems being those of low achievement, especially in the intermediate stage, and illiteracy. From these previous observations the researcher decided it is necessary to conduct the research in that aspect which might contribute to a clearer picture of the effects of socio-economic factors on the educational achievement of the students in intermediate schools, and which might help in solving the problem of low achievement.

### **5.3.2 Examining the Pupils' Files in Schools:**

After receiving permission from the Ministry of Education the researcher visited four intermediate schools (two boys and two girls) in four different governorates. The researcher first looked at how information was organised in the pupils' files. It was found that the file consists of an information sheet, which is used to record general information about the student, such as, the father's occupation, father's education, mother's occupation, mother's education, family size, number of siblings, the address and the telephone number. Other information included in the file was the students' final marks in previous years. The researcher also looked at the system followed in the schools for updating the information in the files and found that the information was updated every six months to make sure of information reflected any changes in the students' situation. Permission was then gained from the school to see the pupils' individual files, and a random sample of students' files was chosen. Ten files were studied (five from a high achieving group and five from a low achieving group), and the level studied was the third stage in intermediate school and depended on their final grades in the previous years. Thus forty files from the four schools were studied

( twenty of high achievement and twenty of low achievement). The researcher read these files and compared the pupils' marks with their socio-economic situations. It was observed that low achieving pupils tended to have a low socio-economic situation and large family size, whereas the high achieving pupils tended to have a high socio-economic situation, high education and occupation level of the family, high family income and small family size. The researcher then tried to investigate the validity and reliability of the existing information by getting permission from the school to phone ten families from high achieving group and ten families from low achieving group to check the validity of the information contained in the files (these twenty families were chosen randomly). It was found that there was a high correlation between the recorded information on the file and what was said by the family on the telephone.

### **5.3.3 Interviews and Observations in the Pilot Study:**

The researcher visited four intermediate schools (two boys and two girls) in four different governorates. In each school he randomly chose one head master, one teacher, one social specialist, two students (one of high achievement and one of low achievement depending on classification done by the Ministry of Education), and their parents.

Thus, the sample was: 4 head masters.

4 teachers.

4 social specialists.

8 students.

8 parents .

The researcher used general interviews, and observations from the sample to obtain general information about the research problem. The researcher discussed with them the socio-economic factors which may affect their educational achievement, and which they thought might be relevant to this study. He found that low achieving families were more reluctant to attend the general interviews. In fact two families did

not attend the general interviews. After the general interviews the researcher was able to conduct individual interviews with each student and parent from the sample to obtain more in-depth information on the problems. He was also during this time able to get the opinions of the two families which did not attend the general interviews. The researcher used a checklist on which to record the basic general information obtained during the interviews. The checklist's sections were derived from the general interviews, observations and literature review. In addition, to reach a level of greater reliability, the researcher showed the checklist to a committee of a number of professors in the Education College in Kuwait University (see Appendix E) .

After examining the pupils' files, the researcher discussed with the students their lifestyles. At the beginning of the discussion the researcher introduced himself and his study. It was found that some students were at first surprised about the reasons for the interview and its importance to them, but after further explanation from the researcher about the reasons for asking the questions and their importance to them and after telling them that the information would be secret and would be just used in the research the surprise disappeared and they become more friendly and co-operative. The researcher noticed from the parents and children that taping the interview inhibited the natural flow of information, especially for the low achievement families, for this reason the researcher decided that taping would not be used in the interview.

The researcher tried to gain more information about the lifestyle of each case by indirect questions in a dialogue. For example, he asked them about their daily activities, the marital status of the parents, the relationship between them and their families, the way of dealing with their parents, their relations with siblings, their relations with their peers, the parental supervision inside and outside the home, the house contents, the homework, their future aspirations and expectations, their hobbies and the relationship between the home and the school.

Observations noted depended not only on what the student said in the interview, but also on the exterior physical signs of the student, the expressive movement of them, the examples they used in conversation, the time it took to answer the questions (Webb 1966).

The researcher also discussed with the parents the lifestyle of each student. He tried to visit the parents in their homes by first asking the school to send letters of introduction to the sample parents before getting in touch with them personally. After that the researcher phoned the parents and gave them his telephone number (he went himself to the parents who had no telephone in order to make an appointment for the visits). All the parents agreed to arrange appointments with the researcher except two parents of pupils of low educational achievement who were reluctant to make an appointment with him. Here the researcher faced difficulty in thinking about a suitable way to convince them to contribute in the research. In order to encourage these two sets of parents to make an appointment, the researcher tried to visit the nearest "Dewaniyah", a public place in which men usually spend their spare time. (There is one or more "Dewaniyah" in each part of the region in Kuwait) The researcher explained to the owner of the "Dewaniyah" the aim of his research in order to get the owner to help him introduce himself to the parents who had refused to make an appointment with him. Taylor (1984 p 24) mentioned "The basic approach in obtaining access to private settings is the snow ball technique: start with a small number of people, win their trust, and ask them to introduce you to others". Polsky (1969 p. 124 ) wrote: " In my experience the most feasible technique for building one's sample is snowballing, get an introduction to one criminal who will vouch for you with others, who in turn will vouch for you with others. It is of course best to start at the top if possible, that is, with an introduction to the most prestigious person in the group you want to study."

When the researcher visited the parents in their homes, in the beginning he introduced himself to them, and then he explained to them the aim of his visit in general without going into details.

Taylor (1984 p. 25 ) stated " It is unwise to give details concerning your research and the precision with which notes will be taken. If they knew how closely they were going to be watched, most people would feel self-conscious in your presence".

The researcher also mentioned to them the importance of the research and how it could have a significant role in developing education in Kuwait. The researcher noticed that some parents of low educational achievement pupils always asked about the research and why exactly the researcher had decided to choose them for his research . He explained to them that he had randomly selected the sample.

The researcher tried to answer every question of the parents clearly in order to communicate effectively with them. He used simple words and the popular language, especially with parents of low education. The researcher tried to gain more information about the family's lifestyle by using indirect questions in conversation and by using the same checklist that was used with their children (see Appendix E).

#### **5.3.4 The Results of the Pilot study :**

- From the field work and the literature review the researcher found that the occupational level of the father, the occupational level of mother, the educational level of father, the educational level of mother, the family size and the family income may be considered as the most important factors which may affect the student educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait. These findings influenced the design of the main study, so the

researcher decided to begin with a statistical analysis of educational performance which attempted to control for the effect of the above SES.

- The researcher found from the pilot study that there were differences in the lifestyle of pupils from different educational achievement levels. For example, it was found that pupils from low educational achievement levels were shy, answered the questions with simple words, their clothes were sometimes untidy, and they described the relationship between themselves and their parents and their siblings in a single word, for example "good" . In addition, the researcher found that most of those pupils did not have a suitable place to do their homework. The researcher also found that the parents of these students, in general, were busy, which meant they did not have enough time to supervise their children. Most of those parents spent their time working afternoons or in the Dewaniyah. A further observation was that the students chose their friends by themselves and the parents rarely asked about these friends. Also, the researcher found that there was a weakness in the relationship between the home and the school, in which the parents' visits to school were seldom. And he found that the dominant behavioural manner that the parents used in treating their children in this group was an autocratic one. In addition, the researcher noticed a weakness in the parents and children's attitudes towards future aspirations and expectations.
- In contrast, pupils from the high educational achievement group demonstrated confidence: they answered the questions more elaborately; their clothes were rarely untidy; and they described the relationship between them and their parents in many words using many examples. The researcher found that the families of those pupils always tried to provide a suitable place for them to do their homework even if the size of the house was modest.

He found that even though the parents were sometimes busy they set a-side enough time to spend with their children. These pupils chose their friends both by themselves and with the supervision of their fathers who always asked about these friends. The above differences were suggestive of the sorts of influence that socio-economic factors could have on student achievement levels but a more in depth study was needed to find out how reliable such finding were.

- The researcher noticed from the pilot study that teachers and social specialists were considered to be a link between the home and school and that they had more ideas about the effects of socio-economic factors on pupils' educational achievement. This was because they were more closely connected to the students and their parents. However, it was also observed that the role of the teachers and social specialists in communicating with parents was not clear and it was not clear how to solve the problem of low achievement. So the researcher decided to take the views of the teachers and social specialists into account in order to obtain a clearer picture of the subject .
  - During the pilot studies the researcher found some cases where there was a high quality home and yet the children were low achievers, and some cases where there was a low quality home and yet the children were high achievers. It was felt that these “deviant” cases could be illuminating factors in this study.
- From the above results that the researcher reached in the interviews and observations inside the home and school he found that there is a need to carry out a qualitative analysis to know how the socio-economic factors act inside the home environment.



#### **5.4 Research Questions:**

From the results of the interviews, observations and visits which obtained from the pilot study the researcher formed his research questions.

The research questions were as follows:

- Is there any difference in pupils' achievement at the intermediate level in Kuwait in relation to :
  - \* occupational level of father?
  - \* occupation level of mother?
  - \* education level of father?
  - \* education level of mother?
  - \* family size?
  - \* family income?
- From the above , which are the key variables that affect pupil achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait ? And how, if at all do, these key variables affect lifestyle?
- What kind of lifestyle exists inside the pupils' families ? In particular
  - \* what is the relationship between the parents and their children ? And how do they treat their children?
  - \* what kind of atmosphere and environment do the children live in at home?
  - \* what kind of supervision do the parents follow inside and outside the home?
- \* what is the relationship between the father and mother in the home?

- \* according to the parents ,what kind of relationship exists between the family and the school? And how, if at all, do these factors explain the statistical correlation between SES factors and school achievement.  
Finally, from the above evidence what are the policy implications for the problem of low achievement in Kuwait intermediate schools?
- How can schools treat the problem of low achievement students in intermediate schools in Kuwait ?
- What kind of methods do schools use in communicating with parents?
- According to the deviant cases how can the situation of a family of high socio-economic level having children of low achievement be explained, and conversely how can the situation of a family of low socio-economic level having children of high achievement be explained?
- According to the parents, students, teachers, and social specialists, what is the best way to reduce the number of low achieving pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait ?
- Although the study's focus is on the relationship between socio-economic factors and educational achievement it will be important to establish that there are not strong school effects. The data on educational achievement will be scrutinised on a school by school basis to determine the range of inter-school differences.

### **5.5 Generating The Main Sample:**

The samples in the main study were

- a- third grade intermediate school pupils ( male and female) in State of Kuwait.
- b- parents of pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait.
- c- teachers and social specialists of intermediate schools in Kuwait.

To establish the distinctive characteristics of the sample it now seems desirable to describe the domains from which the sample was selected.

Kuwait is divided into five governorates. These are the capital (Al-Assemah), Al-Farwaniya, Al-Ahmadi, Al-Jahra and Hawali.

There are various types of housing in each area of each governorate. One type of housing is the villa (private house). The other types of housing are those of medium and low-level income sectors. It is easy to see that the distinguishing characteristics of economic life in Kuwait is that the Kuwaiti population enjoys to some extent a reasonable level of economic life. Because of the oil income, Kuwait has the highest per capita income in the world (Hakim, 1984).

The diversity in the economic level of individuals is due to the differentiation in incomes of different sectors of the population. Incomes range between high, that is 1,201 K.D a month and more, the high- middle incomes range from 901 to 1200 K.D. a month, the low-middle ranging from 501-700, and the limited (low) income from 170 to 500 K.D. per month (Ministry of Planning, 1991). As a result of this and its effects, Kuwaiti society has become a mixture of modern, urban, and rural, and even the Bedouin type of life is still to be found (Al-Jardawi, 1978).

#### **5.5.1 Selecting the Sample:**

The researcher determined the main features of Kuwaiti society on which the sample was matched. Thus, the researcher chose the schools of five governorates previously mentioned (Al-Assemah, Al-Farwaniya, Al-Ahmadi, Al-Jahra and Hawali) these five governorates in general cover the whole of Kuwait society in terms of most aspects of life.

The researcher chose randomly two regions from each governorate which include different cultures and economic levels (high, medium and low) (Cohen and Manion 1989), argue that an investigator can use a stratified random sampling to have a more representative sample), for example, Al-Shwaik and Abdullah Al-Salem are chosen from Al-Assemah governorate. From Al-Jahra and Al-Ahmadi governorates the study involved, Al-Waha, the New Al-Jahra, Al-Dahar and Al-Fantas west region.

From Al-Farwaniya governorate, Al-Rabiah and Al-Omariya were chosen.

The total number of pupils in the intermediate schools in Kuwait is 16,562 (males and females- Kuwaiti only). From the ten regions (which have been taken from the main five governorates mentioned) 20 intermediate schools were chosen randomly, 2 schools from each region (one male and one female). From each school the researcher randomly chose one class. Each class consisted of 29-32 pupils approximately. The total number of pupils under investigation in the 20 schools was 601 pupils ( 297 male and 304 female) (see Appendix I). Their final marks were taken from their school records in the third grade. To determine the high and low achieving group for the interviews the researcher depended on the classification done by the Ministry of Education in Kuwait as regards educational achievement in the intermediate stage. This was as follows:-

High from 561 - 600 marks: Low 340 and below

The issue of using this aggregate marks as the indicator of achievement will be considered again later. These marks are the total for the basic subjects of: Arabic language, Islamic education, foreign language (English) , Mathematics, Science and Social subjects. These are taken in the third grade of the intermediate stage at the end of the year . The highest marks are 600 and the lowest ones are 340. At this stage the testing system is supervised by the Ministry of Education in Kuwait which acts through its departments in every governorate of the five governorates. This should ensure that all tests are at the same level. The central system in the Ministry of Education is dominant in determining the curricula, test system, assessment and kind of questions. This gives much more validity and reliability to the tests.

## **5.6 Design of the Research Instruments:**

The main population in the research was a sample of 601 pupils in the third year intermediate schools, their parents , their teachers and their social specialists. The researcher used the following instruments :-

- pupil questionnaires (see Appendix A) were based on information collected from the pupils' school record. This procedure was followed to obtain accurate information.
- interviews (1,2,3 and 4) (see Appendices B, C, D) were undertaken by the researcher in the homes and schools . These interviews were conducted with a sample of :
  - \* twenty parents and twenty of their children (ten from high achievement (one male and one female from each governorate), and ten from low achievement (one male and one female from each governorate).
  - \* ten teachers ( one male and one female from each governorate).
  - \* ten social specialists ( one male and one female from each governorate)These interviews also included questions that were used to provide supplementary information from the study.
- Case studies:

From the main sample the researcher also chose four case studies ( two students from high educational achievement level who had a different quality of home, and two from low educational achievement levels who also have a different quality of home).

## **5.7 Administering Questionnaires:**

The researcher decided to choose the questionnaire to collect the socio-economic data about the main random sample( 601 students) from their files in schools. The following reasons justified why the results were reliable. First, the system followed in the schools, which was observed in the pilot study and which was based on updating the information every six months, gave this information a high degree of validity and reliability. Second, the choosing of a random sample during the pilot study to test the validity and reliability of the information showed that this information was indeed reliable. Third, the assumption is that the social specialists and those with BA qualifications in social work with responsibility for recording the information on the files do this accurately. Fourth, the researcher took a sample of forty students from the twenty schools (one high achiever and one low achiever from each school) that had been researched and by checked the information on the telephone before commencing the use of the questionnaire. Fifth, the information was easy to obtain because there is no income tax system in Kuwait and so people are not reticent about divulging their income, also people in Kuwait do not think that it is embarrassing to divulge their income, number of siblings, kind of job and educational level of the mother and their father.

### **5.7.1 Constructing the Questionnaire:**

The pupils' questionnaire (see Appendices A) was constructed in order to address the main research questions which were identified through the literature review and pilot study. During the construction of the pupils' questionnaire the researcher tried to make its sections clear and understandable and congruent with the files' sections in order to be easy for the specialists to record the information. Cohen and Manion (1980, p. 80) quote Davidson (1970) and say that a successful questionnaire must be "clear unambiguous, and uniformly workable. Its design must minimize potential

errors from respondents ---a questionnaire has to help in enjoying the respondent's interest."

All the above was taken into consideration when the questionnaire was constructed. Very clear words which helped the respondents were used. The questionnaire items were gleaned from other studies (Al-Shehab 1991). The researcher tried to make sure that the questionnaire sections covered all the points that were needed to be studied in order to ensure content validity and face validity of the questionnaire. In addition, the researcher tried to increase the validity of the questionnaire by showing it to a committee of specialists at Bath University and taking their observations and recommendations into account. The questionnaire was also shown to a committee of specialists in Kuwait University to make sure the questionnaire was compatible with the pupils' files.

A further test of the validity of the questionnaire was conducted by giving the questionnaire to ten of the social specialists (one male and one female in each governorate) and seeing how far it was understood. Also, the same statistical technique used in other comparable studies was employed to find if there is relationship between the socio-economic factors and educational achievement.

#### **5.7.2 Translation of The Questionnaire:**

The questionnaire was translated into Arabic. This was done to achieve clarity of meaning and to remove any language barriers. The translated items were checked by several post-graduate colleagues in the school of modern languages (Bath University). Their recommendations were considered in the revision of questions. Both the English and the Arabic revisions of questionnaire were sent to Prof. Abue Alam R., Prof. Al-Fakay. H., Dr. Morsiy. K., Dr. Al-Sherif. N. and Dr. Al-Masalem. B, who were staff members at the College of Education, University of Kuwait. Their recommendations were also considered.

### **5.7.3 Content Of The Questionnaire:**

The parental occupation was measured in accordance with the scheme of the socio-economic index for occupational categories in the State of Kuwait (see Table 5.1) and with regard to parents' education a seven category scale was used, which provides the level achieved by parents. These details of the scale are :

- 1- No education (illiterate)
- 2- Read and write
- 3- Primary education
- 4- Intermediate education
- 5- Secondary education
- 6- Diploma
- 7- Graduate & Post Graduate

According to the Annual statistical Abstract 1991 and the 1985 Census the families in Kuwait in general are considered to be of a large size . The researcher used the classification done in Kuwait by (AL-Rasheed 1987) of the family size as the main guideline. The family size was grouped under the following headings :

- 1- 1-2 children
- 2- 3-4 children
- 3- 5 to 7 children
- 4- 8 to 10 children
- 5- more than 10

The researcher used statistics regarding the workers' monthly wages group and occupation covered by the social insurance system (Annual Statistical Abstract 1991),



as the main guidelines to measure the family income. Family income was grouped under the following headings (by Kuwaiti Dinner (K.D)):

- 1- 170-500 K.D
- 2- 501-700 K.D
- 3- 701-900 K.D
- 4- 901-1200 K.D
- 5- 1201 and over

#### **5.7.4 Procedures for Administering the Questionnaire:**

The researcher visited the Ministry of Education in Kuwait to get permission to visit the schools. After receiving permission, he started his field work. The researcher visited the randomly chosen schools to allot pupils' questionnaires to them and to discuss with headmasters and social specialists the ways of filling in the information on the questionnaire. The majority of the schools returned the questionnaire without any difficulties except for a few schools where there were some slight problems. The researcher with the cooperation of schools administration in those schools overcame these problems easily.

#### **5.7.5 Statistical Analysis of the Questionnaire:**

The data related to the pupils' questionnaire was statistically analysed at the Kuwait University, Computer center, under the supervision of Prof. Abo-Alam and Dr. Rajandra using a computer program based on SPSS. This will follow in the next chapter.

#### **5.8 Interviews :**

The researcher interviewed a sample of students (from high and low achievement groups), parents, teachers, and social specialists from the main sample. In addition,

there is an advantage of choosing interviews which is: its ability to give in depth information about the respondents' world as Oppenheim (1966) indicated, which helps in giving an inclusive picture about how the socio-economic factors affect the home environment, activities, internal relationships and in turn educational achievement. Benney and Hughes (1970) point out, the interview is the "favored digging tool" of sociologists and social scientists who rely largely on verbal accounts to learn about social life. Cannell and Kahn (1968) have defined the research interview as a 'two -person conversation initiated by interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research - relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation'. Tuckman (1972) describes the interview as follows: 'By providing access to what is inside a person's head , it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (information or knowledge), what a person likes or dislikes (preferences and values ) and what a person thinks (beliefs and attitudes ). Second, it may be used to test hypotheses or to suggest new ones ; or as an explanatory device to help identify relationships.

#### **5.8.1 Constructing Interview Schedules:**

Interview schedules (1,2,3 and 4) were prepared to be used with students, their parents, teachers and social specialists in intermediate schools in Kuwait. Each interview schedule included enough time to give an introduction as to the purpose of the study. Some questions in the interview were selected from other studies, while others were developed by the researcher by drawing on his own experience as a teacher in Kuwaiti schools and from his colleagues' experience in the work. And this was in order to obtain more reliable and valid information. The researcher tried to make sure the questions were not psychologically threatening to the interviewee. At the same time the questions were designed to be clear, to present one idea, and to be unambiguous (Goetz 1984). Also the use of strange and difficult words which have

more than one meaning were avoided to prevent weakening the reliability of the interview. This was especially important for use with parents with a low level of education. In addition, one or more questions were asked for each aspect important to the study, to make sure the study was fully inclusive of all these aspects. Bias when putting the questions was also avoided, however, by looking at the general picture and not one particular group. In order to give reliability to the information and aspects that were needed to be studied the researcher tried to ask the same questions to the student and her/his parents, but in a different way and so provide more valid information. The researcher used open-ended questions with the teachers and social specialists. There are a number of advantages in open -ended questions. First, they allow the interviewer to make a more accurate assessment of what the respondent really believes. Second, they are flexible. Third, they enable the interviewer to test the interviewee, to probe so that he may go into more depth if he chooses ,or clear up any misunderstanding (Cohen and Manion 1989) .

However, with the students and parents, the researcher used a mixture of open -ended and scale or structured questions, because he found from the pilot study that the students (especially the low achievement students), and parents (especially those who were illiterate) gave unclear ambiguous answers. Thus, the researcher used more directional questions if needed but at the same time took advantage of the open-ended questions.

#### **5.8.2 Validity and Reliability of the Interview Schedules:**

The researcher took into account two important constructs in measurement which are validity and reliability. In brief, validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, while reliability, on the other hand, is the extent to which a measuring device is consistent in measuring what ever it measures. In order to approach the validity of the interviews schedules the researcher tried to reach the content validity by presenting all items concerning his subject.

Ary (1972 p.191 )stated: " content validity refers to the degree to which a test samples the content area which is to be measured ". In other words how well do the tool items represent the universe of all which might be asked on this subject? However two subdivisions have been suggested for content validity. First, face validity , second, sampling validity.

The researcher tried to attain both of these in order to make his interview schedules more valid. Ary (1972 p.192 ) stated " When one makes a judgment as to whether a test is valid for certain purposes by reading over the items but without any objective evaluation, one is, in fact assessing the face validity of the test ". In fact for public relations and other considerations a test or instrument not only should measure what it is intended to measure but also should appear to ask the right questions.

The researcher also tried to put enough items in to each part what he wanted to know about in order to reach sampling validity. Ary (1972 p.193 ) stated: "If the content validity of an instrument is based upon an adequate sampling of the potential questions from a defined universe of items, it could be said to have sampling validity".

In order to test the reliability and the validity of the interviews , the researcher carried out a pre-test for the tools. He chose a sample of two teachers ( one male and one female ); two social specialists ( one male and one female ), four parents and their children ( one male from high achievement, one male from low achievement , one female from high achievement, and one female from low achievement ).

In order to make more validity for the information and more depth for the interviews , the researcher triangulated the interviews for the pupils, their parents , their teachers

and their social specialists. Sometimes the cause of invalidity in interview is, bias, but how can bias be overcome? Cohen and Manion (1989 p.318) stated " Various writers have suggested the following as means of reducing bias : careful formulation of questions so that the meaning is crystal clear; thorough training procedures so that an interviewer is more aware of the possible problems ; probability sampling of respondents ; and sometimes by matching interviewer characteristics with those of the sample being interviewed." In other words , the characteristically human element in interviewing is necessary to its' validity. The more the interview becomes sensible, not biased, and calculating , the less likely the interview is to be discerned as a friendly dealing, and the more calculated the response also is likely to be .

In fact the validity and reliability are essentially and necessarily based on judgment. Hence, when conducting the pupils' questionnaire, interview schedules 1,2,3 and 4, which were designed to be used in the applied part of the study, the researcher filtered them after evaluation and discussion in an open seminar at Bath University in October 1992.

### **5.8.3 Translation of the Interview Schedules:**

The interviews schedules were translated into Arabic. This was done to achieve a clarity of meaning and to remove any language barriers. The translated items were checked by several post-graduate colleagues in the school of modern languages (Bath University).

The researcher sent the tools to the Arabic language inspector in order to get his feedback on the language of them. Also, the interview schedules were sent to five teachers and five social specialists, one teacher and one social specialist in each governorate in order to adopt the Arabic language standard of the parents, teachers and social specialists. Their recommendations were considered in the revision of questions. Both the English and Arabic revisions of interviews questions were sent to

Prof. Abue Alam R, Prof Al-Fakay. H, Dr. Morsiy. K, Dr. Al-Sharif.N, and Al-Masalem.B, who were staff members at the college of Education, University of Kuwait. Also, those people's recommendations were taken into account.

#### **5.8.4 Procedures for Interviews:**

Testing validity and reliability of the interviews was not limited to the construction of interview schedules but also by the application and analysis of interviews in the field. To make this possible a plan was devised to facilitate validity and reliability while the interviews were being carried out. This plan was commenced with a pre-test study before the interviews were applied in February 1993. Borg (1989 p.445) wrote: "No amount of careful planning will ensure a successful interview study. Pre-testing will nearly always reveal flaws in your question, inadequacies in your coding system, gaps in interviewer training, and other problems that must be solved before research data can be collected."

So, before interviews ( 1,2,3 and 4 ) were begun, a pre-test for interview questions was conducted. Two teachers (one male and one female), two social specialists (one male and one female), four parents and their children from the main sample (one male from high achievement, one male from low achievement, and one female from high achievement, one female from low achievement) were selected. The purpose of the pre-test was to investigate reliability and validity, ensure that the questions would gather the most valuable information , and to find out if there were any problems which might hamper the study . The researcher found from the pre-test that the open-ended questions were very clear to the teachers and social specialists. He found these people to be enthusiastic about answering the questions in detail. He also found that there were no problems in using a tape recorder in the interviews. However, the researcher noticed from the pilot study and pre-test given to the parents and children that taping the interview inhibited the natural flow of information especially for the low achieving families. For this reason the researcher decided that taping would not

be used in the main interviews. Thus, he trained himself how to write observation and to be quick in that by carrying out interviews on some of his relatives and friends who have different social and cultural situations as a kind of practice. This helped him to carry out the main interviews and to be quick in recording the observations. He also noticed that the parents and the students were confused as to what kind of data they were supposed to give ; some of them found the questions too personal. Such trends in the pre-test interviews were ascribed to the fact that some parents and students did not know much about the intent of the research .

So the researcher decided that in main interview it would be important to give more information about the goals of the research. The researcher faced an important problem which was, how he could visit the women ( mothers of pupils who did not have fathers ). He solved this by being accompanied by a social specialist from a female school in order to help him enter the home. The researcher tried to do the interview with both mothers and fathers. He requested that the interview should include both of them but he did not force them to do so. With respect to the parents who did not cooperate the same procedures of pilot study that were mentioned previously were used.

In each main interview the researcher began by breaking the ice. He also gave them more information about the goals of the research, explaining to them about scientific research . In addition, the researcher explained that he was not required to tell anything to anyone else. In other words what they said to him was quite confidential, the information given to him would be used only for scientific research purposes. He explained to them also that their names would be disguised when writing up the research. Such an introduction for each interview proved to be helpful. The parents and the students became less confused than they were in the pre-test interview, and they also became more co-operative and comfortable .

Before and during the interviews the researcher tried to keep respect with regard to using expressions that were appropriate to the educational level of the interviewee, for example, using the word “uncle” to the old man, “aunt” to the old woman and “mister” to the educated man, since this is appropriate with Kuwaiti traditions and relationships. This took place in order to make the interviewee feel comfortable to accept the questions and to give valid information. In addition, the researcher tried to carry out the interviews in a quiet place in order to make the interviewee feel at ease. Stewart (1982) and Borg, (1989) indicated that respondents are not likely to reveal this type of information about themselves on a questionnaire and will only reveal it in an interview situation if they have been made to feel comfortable by a skillful interviewer.

The researcher tried to make a kind of balance in carrying out the interview by avoiding inactivity when asking the question to the respondent. At the same time he tried to avoid bias and keeping up with the interviewee which may affect the reliability of the information and the interview progress. When asking the question the researcher tried to transfer it clearly and making sure that it arrived to the interviewee in the right way and without any ambiguity. Also, he avoided giving a sign or any intimation that indicated his personal opinion in the subject. He used one style in asking the questions without intervention in the interviewee opinion by giving commentary on respondent’s opinion or by giving other intimations that may affect his opinion. Powney and Watts (1987 p.42) quote Brenner (1981a) in some basic rules for the interviewer, when he says that the interviewer must:

- “read the question as they are worded in the interview schedule.
- ask every question that applies to the respondent.
- only probe non-directively.
- make sure he/she has correctly understood an answer and that is adequate.
- not answer for the respondent.”



On other hand, the most important things in the interview were listening clearly to the interviewee and not leaving any points that were unclear, but asking the interviewee for explanations after the end of every question and taking into account avoiding bias in writing down the observations, and this is in order to ensure the external validity of the interview. Cohen (1989) found that the most practical way of achieving greater validity is to minimise the amount of bias as much as possible. The researcher tried to write all words including slang words that the respondent used. Also, he included in the interview schedule comments on the reaction of the interviewee to the questions. These comments were added to the interview schedule immediately after each interview when they were still clear in the interviewer's mind. In addition, the researcher tried to remind the respondent that the information would be secret, especially when the question seemed to be more private which encouraged the interviewee to give more valid and real information. The researcher tried to carry out the interview at a time that the interviewee determined in order to make the interviewee feel comfortable and so that there weren't any other reasons that prevented him from speaking freely and without being in a hurry. After the end of the interview the researcher looked through the information that he had written and expanded on the notes he had taken and divided the comments on reactions to the questions into sections. When these sections appeared have misunderstandings, the interview conducted further interviews to clarify these points.

The data was systematically recorded in Arabic, since all the interviews and explanations were done in Arabic. After writing the interviews, each interview was placed in an individual file. All the collected systems and completed data were translated from the Arabic language, in which it was originally recorded, into English

Before translating the data, the complete data were read several times for the following reasons : firstly, to catch main ideas, themes and categories relevant to the

purpose of the research; secondly, to become familiar with the general information that the data provided in order not to lose its essence while translating it from one language to another. That is to say, an effort was made to capture the whole context of the data in Arabic in order to be able to keep that context perfect in the translation. After translating the data into English, they were read again to catch the main themes while in English and to ensure that the data did not lose their essence in the process of translation. Each interview was given a code number. Later on each code number was given a different name from the real name .

The teachers and social specialists interviews took one hour to one and half hours each, but students' and parents' interviews took between two and half hours and three hours .

### **5.9 Examination of “Deviant” Cases :**

The researcher noticed from the pilot study that there were a few cases of students who had a high achievement but are from low quality homes and vice-versa, so he decided to use a case study, to examine these cases in depth. The researcher chose four cases: two cases of students having high educational achievement but a different quality of home; and two cases of students having low educational achievement but also a different quality of home.

The case study is one of several ways of doing social science research. According to Yin (1989 ) a case study is a design particularly suited to situations where it is impossible to separate the phenomenon's variables from their context. Wilson (1979 p . 448) conceptualizes the case study as a process "which tries to describe and analyze some entity in qualitative, complex and comprehensive terms not infrequently as it unfolds over a period of time."

Furthermore, Becker (1968 p.233 ) defines the purposes of a case study as twofold :  
"to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the groups under study" and "to develop general theoretical statements about regularities in social structure and process". One advantage of case study is that, case study data, paradoxically, is strong in reality but difficult to organize. Other advantages are that case studies recognize the complex embeddedness of social truths and present research data in more publicly accessible form than other kinds of research reports. (Cohen and Manion 1989).

Once the researcher used the case study, there are some skills which are important to follow . First of all, he should be able to ask good questions and to construe the answers. He should be a good listener and not be trapped by his own ideologies. He should be adjustive and pliant, so that newly encountered situations can be seen as opportunities, not threats. Fourthly, he should not be guided by preconceived notions. (Yin 1989 )

There are some sources of evidence which can be the focus of data collection for case studies. The sources of this present research were: documentation (e.g. school documents, teachers reports and evaluation, homework books and, pupils files), interviews and direct observations.

The researcher decided to carry out a test on the questionnaires in order to make more validity by giving this test to ten of the social specialists (one male and one female in each governorate). This was to confirm the validity of the questionnaires and to know how far they were understood. At the same time all the information was obtained from the students files in the school in order to obtain more validity and reliability to the information.

In November 1992 the researcher returned to Kuwait and before starting field work in January 1993 , he presented the tools of the study to a committee in the School of

Education at Kuwait University. The researcher took into account their recommendations after which, the research instruments then took their final form .

The researcher also tried enhancing the validity and reliability of interviews by these procedures :

1. Understand every word the respondent said in the interview even the slang words.
2. All questions asked were to be written down. This was to help researchers make sense out of answers recorded earlier at a later date .
3. The context in which questions were asked and situations observed were to be described.
4. The bases for inferences the respondents made were to be documented.
5. The respondents thought questions and general observation in interview schedules were to be written down and a special notes made.
6. Individuals were to be interviewed more than once . Disagreements over time in individual reports may suggest that the respondent is an unreliable informant .

#### **5.9.1 Validity and Reliability of the Case Studies:**

When conducting the case studies, the researcher followed the guidelines for the case studies by using the four tests which Kidder (1981, p. 7&8) summarized in the following points:

- \* Reliability: demonstrating that the operations of a study- such as the data collection procedures- can be repeated, with the same results.
- \* Construct Validity: establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied.
- \* External validity: establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized.

- \* Internal validity: establishing a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships.

In order to satisfy these tests the researcher tried to assess reliability for the case studies before and during data collection and to use the case studies protocol as represented by the following:

1. To study and understand the aims and the problems of the case studies and to know the subject that is being researched.
2. To pose clear questions, concerned with the main goal of the research and to use open questions to obtain more in-depth information.
3. To follow suitable procedures to attract the required cases and make the interviewees relaxed.
4. To provide suitable means and a suitable place in order to get the correct information.
5. to create a case study data base from different sources, namely by:  
obtaining information through interview questions, by using direct observation, and by studying and preparing the documents relevant to the study so that they were ready for analyzing. Yin (1989) indicated that the case study protocol is a major tactic in increasing the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying out the case study.

In order to investigate construct validity for the case studies during the collection of data, the researcher tried to follow suitable procedures: Firstly, he used several sources in collecting data. The researcher not only depended on interviews (1,2) with the students and their parents to collect data but he also depended on many other sources such as, student's files, school letters to the parents, teachers' observation, teachers' interviews, social specialists' interviews, interviews with the students'

friends, the students' certificates, general reports about the students, students' homework and the researcher's personal observation. A variety of sources should help to obtain more valid information. Yin and Bateman (1983) found that those case studies using multiple sources of evidence were rated more highly, in terms of their overall quality, than those that relied on only single sources of information. Yin (1989 p. 97) wrote "any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following corroboratory mode". Secondly, when collecting data, the researcher not only tried to base every case report on valid information but also required the interviewees to give evidence for everything they said. In addition, the researcher noted down every point that the cases mentioned, and he avoided bias and personal opinions in writing reports. He also tried to present a clear picture of the reality without neglecting any observation. Yin (1989, p. 102) wrote: "the case study report is assuredly the same as evidence that was collected at 'scene of the crime' during the data collection process; conversely, no original evidence should have been lost, through carelessness or bias, and therefore fail to receive appropriate attention in considering the facts of a case". He added that "if these objectives are achieved, a case study also will have addressed the methodological problem of determining construct validity, thereby increasing the overall quality of the case."

When carrying out the case studies the researcher avoided the personal opinion and bias for every observation in order to strengthen the external validity. Borg (1989) indicated that another threat to external validity, found in many qualitative studies, is called "experimenter effect". He added that this is the degree to which the biases or the expectations of the observer have led to distortions of the data. In conducting the studies the researcher tried to use the same procedures with every case. After collecting the data, the researcher arranged the data of every case by using a number of matrices in which to put the data, including proofs given, and then he made the

analysis. The researcher tried to analyse every case individually depending on the results obtained during the study and then he classified ,for example, the subjects who were similar in high educational level but were different in socio-economic level and the reverse. This was done in order to make connections between the results obtained (Cross-Case Analysis). Furthermore, the researcher used the same procedures in translating the subjects' speech as he used in translating the interviews.

In order to reach the internal validity required in case studies, Yin (1989) indicated that when analysing data it is helpful to do pattern matching, do explanation- building and do time- series analysis. The researcher followed these points in analysing data, which was appropriate with the nature of the research itself.

#### **5.9.2 The Procedure of the case study :**

The researcher decided to use case study design for many reasons: first, the role of case study in explaining the causal links in real- life interventions that are too complex for survey or experimental strategies. Secondly, a description of the real-life context in which an intervention has occurred. Third, an evaluation can benefit, again in a descriptive mode, from an illustrative case study. Fourth, an exploration of those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Cronbach, et al 1980, Patton, 1980, Yin, 1989).

There were four cases studies conducted, as mentioned before. In the case study the researcher tried to find out the reasons why there were two cases which had different socio-economic levels and high achieving children, and why two other cases which had different socio-economic levels had low-achieving children. After choosing a sample which contained the required difference ( two cases having high achieving children, but from different quality homes and two cases having low achieving children, but from different quality homes), the researcher with the help of the school sent letters to the parents to explain what the study required, the purpose of the study

and the importance of the study in improving education in Kuwait. What was unexpected was that both sets of parents of high achieving children responded quickly to the study, although the families had different socio-economic levels while the parents of low achieving children delayed in their response to the study. With regard to the parents who delayed the researcher phoned them and found that the parents of low achieving children who had a high socio-economic level spoke to him and explained that they had not responded quickly due to being busy in their work. The parents of the low achieving children who had a low socio-economic level expressed puzzlement about the reasons for carrying out this study and also mentioned they were very busy with work and life matters. The researcher tried to explain in an understandable way the aims of the study and its importance. The researcher tried to phone the neighbour of the fourth case, the parents of a low achiever who also had a low socio-economic level, (this neighbour had the main Dewaniya in the block) and asked him to explain to the parents the purpose of the study, its idea and its contents. After that, all the parents seemed to understand the study and agreed to do the interviews.

When carrying out the case study the researcher took into account several points which contributed to investigating the validity and reliability of the case studies. First, he took the life histories of the family members in order to know of their educational and social levels and to understand how they saw life in their own eyes. This was to help give a clear picture of the subjects. Burgess (in Shaw, 1966, p. 4) explained the importance of life histories: "In the life history is revealed, as in no other way, the inner life of the person, his successes and failures in securing his destiny in a world too often at variance with his hopes and ideals." Frazier (1978) indicated the life history enables us to know people intimately, to see the world through their eyes, and to enter into their experiences vicariously.

Secondly, the researcher asked carefully and clearly the questions in order to transfer the question as it was without any increase or decrease in the words used. Then he



noted the answers as clearly as possible without any increase or decrease in words used. The researcher tried to avoid giving any comments on what the interviewees said, using his thinking and the words he used. Also the researcher tried not to interrupt the interviewee in order to gain more information from him in a natural way. Taylor (1984) mentioned that if you want people to open up about their feelings and views, you have to refrain from making negative judgments about them or putting them down. Taylor added you should try to force yourself not to interrupt an informant even though you are not interested in a topic. Benney and Hughes (1970, p. 140) also wrote: “ the interview is an understanding between two parties that, in return for allowing the interviewer to direct their communication, the informant is assured that he will not meet with denial, contradiction, competition, or other harassment.”

Thirdly, the researcher tried to spread a climate of satisfaction and ease for case studies by telling them that the information would be kept secret and that it would be used only for the study. He added that the real names would not be used but instead he would use fictitious names. This helped the interviewees feel confident when speaking to the interviewer. The researcher tried to make the dialogue between him and the interviewee more active by giving him information and taking from him information which would enrich the research and which would encourage the interviewee to speak in a natural way. Taylor (1984) indicated that the interviewer must create an atmosphere in which people feel comfortable to talk freely about themselves. Deutscher (1973) noted that people seldom express their true feelings and views under “conditions of sterility which are deliberately structured for the interview situation”.

Fourthly, the researcher tried to avoid biases when analysing data or when interviewing. He tried not to use any sign that would indicate his agreement or disagreement about what the interviewee mentioned. In addition, the researcher was not only interested in what the interviewee indicated, but also was interested to learn

of any evidence to support what was said. Thus, the researcher took into account other people's (wife, teachers, social specialists, student and friends) opinions and comments in order to achieve more validity for the data. Taylor (1984 p. 95) indicated some important rules when carrying out interviews:" the researchers sometimes have to "play dumb" but not be insulting. They must be sympathetic, but not patronizing. They have to know when to probe, but stay away from open wounds, they have to be friendly, but not ingratiating."

Fifth, the researcher tried to use interview schedules (1,2) for the children and their parents which used such questions as, 'why', 'how' in order to get more information. Yin (1989) mentioned that the form of the question in terms of how and why provides an important clue regarding the most relevant research strategy to be used. He added that the case study strategy is most likely to be appropriate for how and why questions.

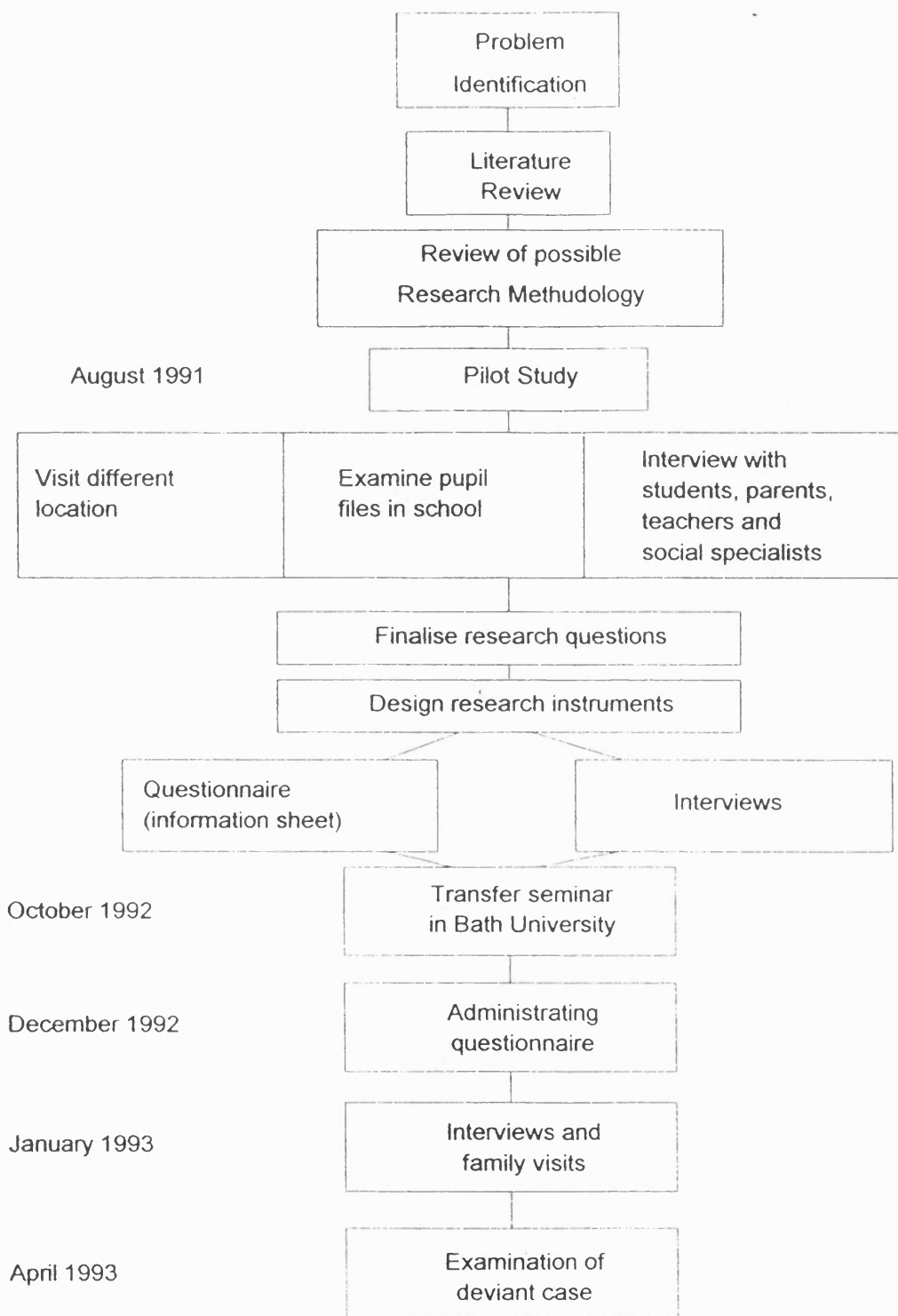
Sixth, the researcher used direct observation in his field work: in meetings, in the case students' activities in school, and with regard to the quality of the home. Yin (1989, p. 91) stated that " observation is often useful in providing additional information about the topic being studied."

In order to obtain more valid data, the researcher carried out three interviews for every family. The first interview was to get to know the parents, to observe them through direct observation, to record some notes and to ask them the research questions. The two other interviews were to confirm some information and to clarify any doubts or observations that the researcher had experienced during the first visit. Every visit took about three to three and half hours. The interviews with students took about two and half to three hours and this was repeated two times with each case. The first interview with the student involved asking questions and making direct observation, while the purpose of the second was to clarify points from the first interview.

|    |                                       |   |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1- | Professional and Technical Workers    | Doctors, University teachers, lawyers, Engineers, Chemists, Pilots,   |
| 2- | Administrative and Managerial Workers | Managers, Company directors, and Higher businessmen.  |
| 3- | Clerical and Related Workers          | Clerks, Superintendents and Heads of Department, whether in companies or in the Civil Services, Secretaries |
| 4- | Sales Workers                         | Lower business, Small Trades and Shop Owners  |
| 5- | Service Workers                       | Drivers, Mechanics, Technicians and Labourers.  |
| 6- | Unskilled Workers                     | Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fishermen, Hunters   |
| 7- | Not Working                           | This category included all the reavents who don't work  |

**Table 5.1** A Scheme of the Socio-Economic index used.

**Source:** Adapted from: Ministry of Planning (1993) Annual Statistical Abstract No. 30, Kuwait: Central Statistical Office, P. 102.



**Figure 5.1 Methodology Progress**

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE STATISTICAL RESULTS**

#### **6.1 Introduction:**

This chapter addresses the issues of the relationship of pupil's achievement to such factors as father's occupation, father's education, mother's occupation, mother's education, family size and family income. The issue of taking total school grades rather than individual subject marks is considered and also that no inter-school differences was found.

A number of statistical steps followed in the research will be explained. These steps were followed in order to obtain answers to the first, second and eighth research questions, and they are as follows: first, means, standard deviation and ANOVA test were used to analyse the relationship between educational achievement and socio-economic factors from one side, and the relationship between the inter-school differences and the educational achievement from other side. Second, correlation was used to analyse the relationship between the pupils' educational achievement and socio-economic factors in a more complex way. Third, multiple regression analysis was used for testing the effects of more than one independent variable on the dependent variable of the socio-economic factors.

#### **6.2 The Score of the Student**

It is traditional in looking at educational achievement to examine either achievements on standardised tests or public examination results. The argument for doing this is that this is the formal way in which society, or at least the state, makes its judgments. Usually a good deal of time and effort has gone into constructing these tests and examinations. Earlier I explained the processes which have been gone through in

Kuwait, which shows that questions of validity and reliability have been addressed by the authorities.

Examinations are designed by the Ministry of Education. There is a special unit which consider questions such as the validity and reliability of the process. The examinations follow closely the designated syllabus for each subject. Each examination paper has differentiated questions to cope with different levels of student ability. The whole system, like the national curriculum itself, is highly centralized and tightly controlled. The low inter governorate and inter school variability of results would seem to confirm this centralized picture. There is no reason to believe that, within their own terms, these national examinations do not offer valid and reliable measures of academic achievement.

There is however a bigger question about using examination results as a measure of academic achievement which is relevant to this thesis. The question can be put like this: are the examinations, and the way they are assessed, themselves biased towards certain populations, in particular is there any reason to believe that they favour the abilities and interests of middle class children? This is part of the : "reproduction thesis" Whereas this is a question which has certainly been asked of the situation pertaining in many Western countries, I can only find one study ( Al Kally,1984 ) which even addresses this question in the countries of the Arab world. Even in Western countries although it is still an issue, the burgeoning school effectiveness movement largely uses such data and considers it unproblematic. Accordingly, although I wish to acknowledge this issue, for the purpose of this thesis, I am going to treat the examination and test results as unproblematic measures of academic achievement.

### **6.2.1 Justification for taking the overall grade**

It is common in Western countries to examine educational achievement by examining performance in certain key subject areas- the language of the country (English in the case of US and UK studies) and mathematics. Many studies assert the influence of social class by noting typical differences between scores achieved in these subjects. It is argued, for example, that mathematics is largely a school based subject, that is performance in this subject does not owe much to the influence of the home, whereas the native language is much influenced by the richness of the culture of the home Bernstein (1961,1972). Nearly all of these studies have been carried out in English speaking societies and the results may also be indicative not only of social class differences which have their roots in family life but also in the linguistic structure of the language.

The citizens' language and education language in Kuwait is Arabic. Many studies were carried out on Arabic, like, Ahmed (1993) who demonstrated the non-existence of different socio-economic levels in the Arabic language. He added that " our Arabic language which we use in our life and in our schools is not divided into many levels like the language of Cambridge compared to the language of different London quarters" p 127. This means that the Arabic language that is used does not have different levels between different classes in the society. The reason for this is that the Arabic language is the language of the Koran which all social classes of different educational levels use in their daily life. The Koran is learned by heart and is read five times a day in prayers or by reading the Prophetic tradition. This reinforces the standard use of this language to all social classes. Al Ameen, (1993) in his study, indicated that some differences in the Arabic language may appear between the social classes, but they are very small compared with the differences that are seen in British society for example.

Al-Khulaifi (1987) and Al-Shaikh (1989) in their studies on the educational achievement in Kuwait did not find clear differences of children's performance

between Arabic and Mathematics subjects. They found both seemed to be about equally affected by social class measures.

The final grade of the pupil is obtained by adding their score in Arabic, English, History, Science, Mathematics and Religion. To check that it is reasonable to take the final grade and not the individual scores for the separate subjects two schools were selected, one all boys and one all girls, and graphs were drawn of individual subject marks against final grade (see Appendix J).

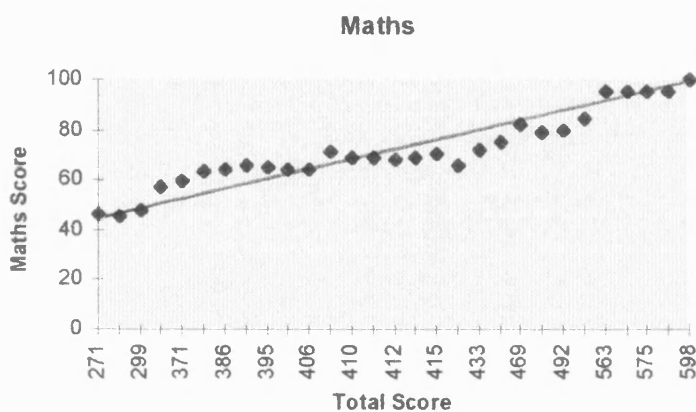


Figure 6.A

A typical graph (Figure 6.A) is illustrated above, this shows a very high correlation between the two measures because there is very little scatter of the points about the straight line. All graphs were very similar to this and indicate that since each subject was highly correlated with the final grade, that no subject influenced the final grade more than any other, that it was reasonable to take the final grade as the academic level of the pupil. The two schools were chosen as representation of the two scores and no differences between them were observed. This further strengthened the case for considering only the final grades of the pupils.



### **6.3 Socio-Economic Factors and Educational Achievement**

The research objective in this part was to test the hypothesis (hypothesis of research questionnaire 1) of the existence of any relationship between the academic performance of the pupils and the occupational level of father, the occupational level of mother, the educational level of father, the educational level of mother, the family size and family income. The hypothesis in this part may be stated as follows:

1. There is no significant difference in the means of pupils' educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait in relation to different occupational levels of the father.
2. There is no significant difference in the means of pupils' educational achievement in intermediate school in Kuwait in relation to different educational levels of the father.
3. There is no significant difference in the means of pupils' educational achievement in intermediate school in Kuwait in relation to different occupational levels of the mother.
4. There is no significant difference in the means of pupils' educational achievement in intermediate school in Kuwait in relation to different educational levels of the mother.
5. There is no significant difference in the means of pupils' educational achievement in intermediate school in Kuwait in relation to different number of children in the family.
6. There is no significant difference in the means of pupils' educational achievement in intermediate school in Kuwait in relation to the level of family income.

#### **6.3.1 Father's Occupation and Children's Educational Achievement:**

(Table 6.1) presents the mean scores of pupil's achievement when they are separated into groups according to their father's occupation.

| Father Occupation | Value | Number of pupils | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|-------------------|-------|------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Prof/Tech         | 1     | 39               | 563        | 21                 |
| Adm/Man           | 2     | 70               | 523        | 58                 |
| Cler/Rel          | 3     | 221              | 447        | 70                 |
| Sales             | 4     | 96               | 403        | 65                 |
| Service           | 5     | 96               | 383        | 65                 |
| Unskilled         | 6     | 72               | 323        | 46                 |
| Not Work          | 7     | 7                | 323        | 36                 |
|                   |       |                  |            |                    |

Table 6.1

These results are represented graphically in the figure below. In drawing this graph the assumption has been made that the father's occupation is on an equal interval scale. This is done merely as a matter of convenience when drawing the graph.

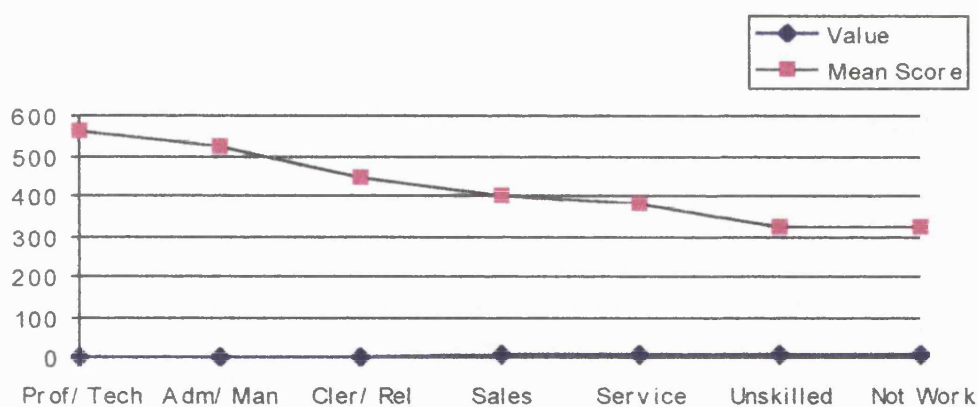


Figure 6.1

These results indicate that as there is an increase in father's occupation, so the academic performance of their children increases. This may be because the parents from higher occupational levels are better able to help their children in educational achievement, because they have more means and resources with which to deal with

the educational needs of their children. A one way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the performance of the pupils and the father's occupation ( $P < 0.001$ ). Hence the null hypothesis 1 is rejected.

### 6.3.2 Father's Education and Children's Educational Achievement:

The procedures adopted in 6.3.1 was repeated, but the groupings were according to the father's education.

| Father Education | Value | Number of Pupils | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|------------------|-------|------------------|------------|--------------------|
| No Education     | 1     | 83               | 357        | 68                 |
| Read and Write   | 2     | 54               | 362        | 70                 |
| Primary          | 3     | 68               | 396        | 77                 |
| Intermediate     | 4     | 133              | 407        | 74                 |
| Secondary        | 5     | 82               | 446        | 67                 |
| Diploma          | 6     | 48               | 470        | 66                 |
| Grad & Post Grad | 7     | 133              | 518        | 65                 |
|                  |       |                  |            |                    |

Table 6.2

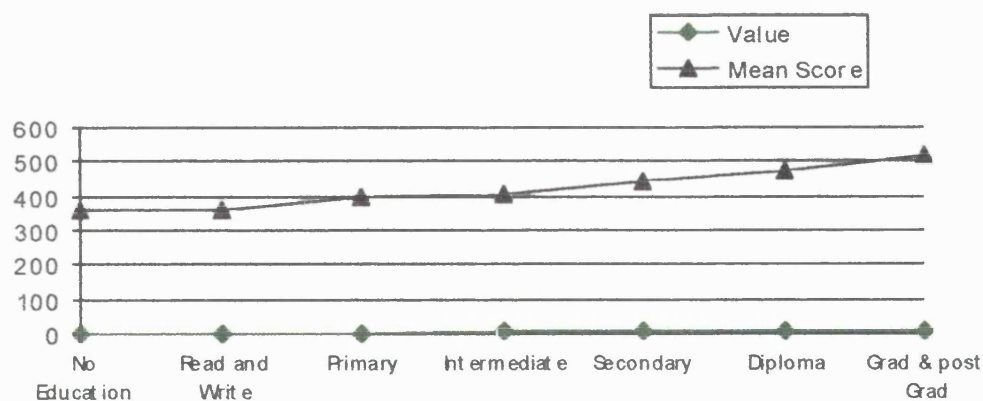


Figure 6.2

It can be seen from the figure that the higher the level of education of the father the greater the possibility of the children being high achievers. In other words there is a positive relationship between the education level of the father and the educational

level of their children. This may be because educated fathers are better able to help their children in their schoolwork than uneducated ones. Also, they may be able to ensure a good environment for their children to achieve high educational achievement which uneducated fathers may not. A one way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the performance of the pupils and the father's education ( $P < 0.001$ ). Hence the null hypothesis 2 is rejected.

### 6.3.3 Mother's Occupation and Children's Educational Achievement:

The procedure adopted in 6.3.1 was repeated, but the groupings were according to mother's occupation.

| Mother's Occupation | Value | Number of pupils | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|---------------------|-------|------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Prof & Tech         | 1     | 7                | 501        | 97                 |
| Admin & manag       | 2     | 36               | 544        | 61                 |
| Cler & Relat        | 3     | 87               | 460        | 72                 |
| Sales               | 4     | 9                | 364        | 56                 |
| Service             | 5     | 1                | 342        |                    |
| Unskilled           | 6     | 5                | 341        | 65                 |
| Not Work            | 7     | 456              | 416        | 87                 |

Table 6.3

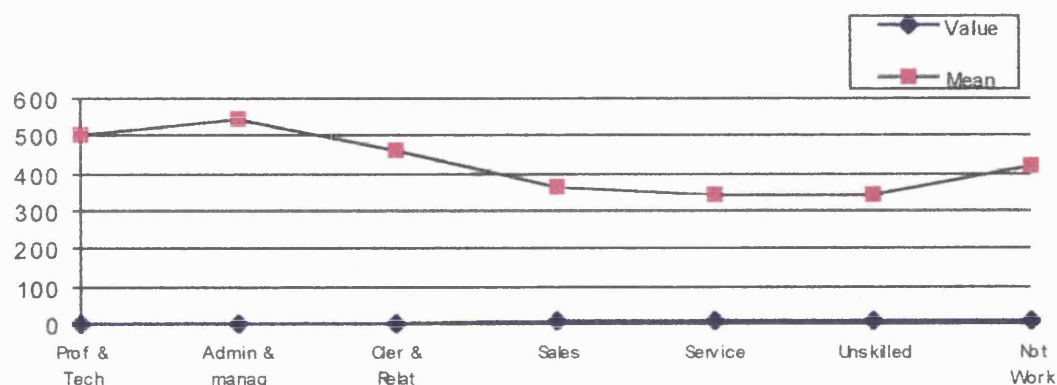


Figure 6.3

This suggests that the mother educational level is not related to their work role. It does not follow that mothers not at work are in any way hindering their children's academic performance. This may be due to the fact that the mothers' work occupation is all related to what the fathers believe. Some fathers may want their wives to work, other may not want them to. This result would then appear to indicate that the achievement of the pupils does not depend upon the mother's occupation.

#### 6.3.4 Mother's Education and Children's Educational Achievement:

The procedure adopted in 6.3.1 was repeated, but the grouping was according to the mother's education.

| Mother Education | Value | Number of pupils | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|------------------|-------|------------------|------------|--------------------|
| No Education     | 1     | 191              | 381        | 76                 |
| Read & Write     | 2     | 55               | 410        | 85                 |
| Primary          | 3     | 38               | 396        | 71                 |
| Intermediate     | 4     | 113              | 428        | 84                 |
| Secondary        | 5     | 73               | 456        | 78                 |
| Diploma          | 6     | 44               | 482        | 67                 |
| Grad & post Grad | 7     | 87               | 517        | 66                 |
|                  |       |                  |            |                    |

Table 6.4

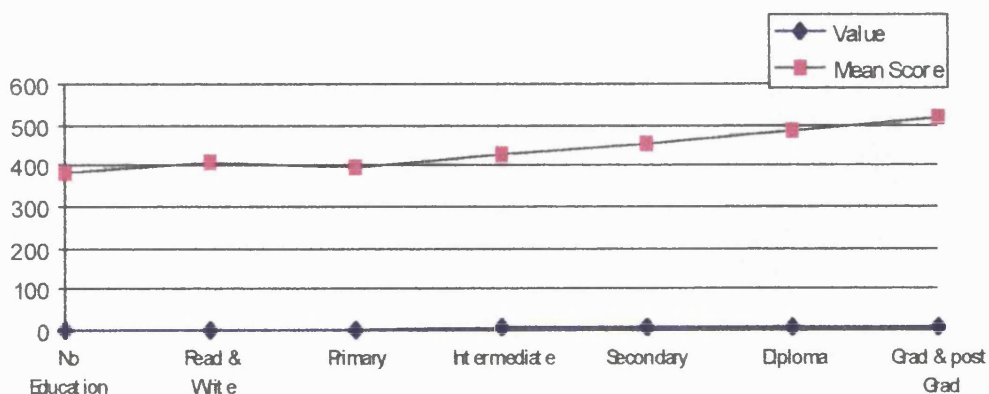


Figure 6.4

It can be seen from the figure that the educational level of the mother appears to have a positive effect on students' achievement apparent. A one way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the performance of the pupils and the mother's education ( $P < 0.001$ ). Hence the null hypothesis 4 is rejected.

### 6.3.5 Family Size and Children's Educational Achievement:

The procedure adopted in 6.3.1 was repeated, but the grouping were according to the family size

| Family Size   | Value | Number of pupils | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|---------------|-------|------------------|------------|--------------------|
| 1-2 Children  | 1     | 16               | 471        | 84                 |
| 3-4 Children  | 2     | 140              | 479        | 86                 |
| 5-7 Children  | 3     | 229              | 437        | 88                 |
| 8-10 Children | 4     | 144              | 395        | 74                 |
| more than 10  | 5     | 72               | 372        | 72                 |

Table 6.5

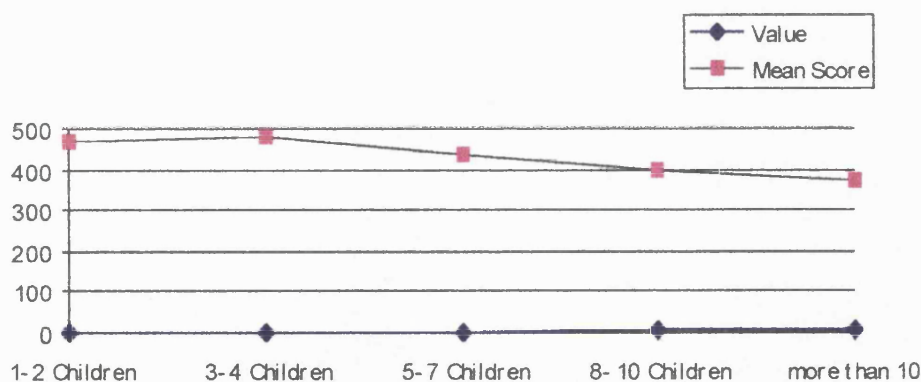


Figure 6.5

It can be seen from the figure that a high number of children in the family has a negative effect on educational achievement. In other words, there is a positive relationship between family size and educational achievement, in which the educational achievement increases whenever the family size decreases, and the reverse, it decreases whenever the family size increases. This may be because the parents are unable to save so much time and attention to individuals as the number of children grows up whereas they are able to do this if they have a small family. A one way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the performance of the pupils and the family size ( $P < 0.001$ ). Hence the null hypothesis 5 is rejected.

#### 6.3.6 Family Income and Children's Educational Achievement:

The procedure adopted in 6.3.1 was repeated, but the groupings were according to the family income.

| Family Income | Value | Number of pupils | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|---------------|-------|------------------|------------|--------------------|
| 170-500 KD    | 1     | 100              | 353        | 66                 |
| 501-700 KD    | 2     | 148              | 392        | 65                 |
| 701-900 KD    | 3     | 162              | 437        | 79                 |
| 901-1200 KD   | 4     | 96               | 467        | 77                 |
| 1200 KD +     | 5     | 95               | 520        | 73                 |
|               |       |                  |            |                    |

Table 6.6

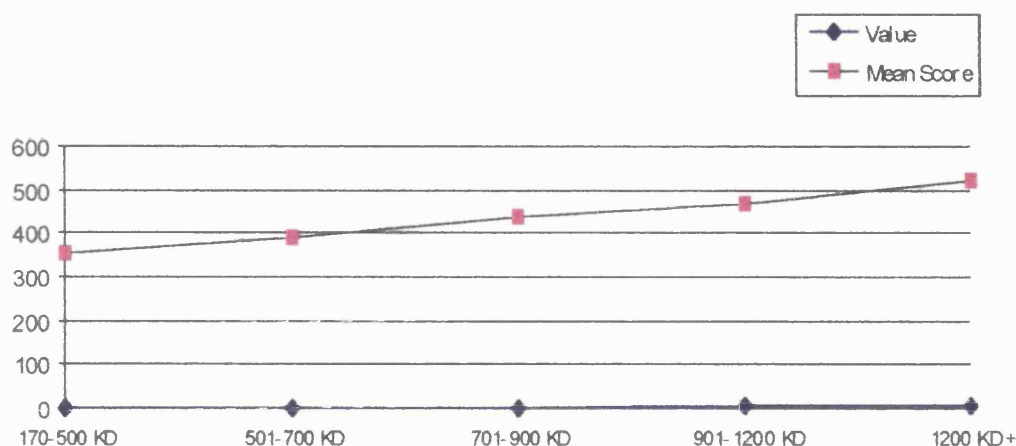


Figure 6.6

It can be seen from the figure that the lower the family income, the greater the probability of low educational achievement in those families.

From the above findings, it is evident that there is an apparent relationship between the family income and educational achievement. This may be because families with high incomes usually have better educational needs of their children than families with low incomes. A one way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the performance of the pupils and the family income ( $P < 0.001$ ). Hence the null hypothesis 6 is rejected.

From these analysis we see that pupils' achievement is almost certainly affected by father's occupation, father's education, mother's education, family size, family income but not the mother's occupation. In other words, a well educated family ( father and mother )with high level occupations (father) having a high income and small family size, almost certainly leads to better performance by their children in intermediate school in Kuwait. This can probably be explained by the child's environment providing better facilities, better understanding of goals and objectives, better supervision of parents and better satisfaction of children's needs.



#### 6.4 Inter-School Differences and Children's Educational Achievement:

The research objective in this part was to test the hypothesis (hypothesis of research questionnaire 8) of the existence of any relationship between the different twenty schools that represent the five governorates and the pupils' educational achievement. The hypothesis in this part may be stated as follows.

There is no significant difference in the means of pupils' educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait selected from the five governorates in Kuwait.

(Table 6.7) shows the means score of pupils' educational achievement in the twenty different schools selected from the five governorates.

| School               | Value | Mean Score | SD  | Number of Students |
|----------------------|-------|------------|-----|--------------------|
| Hala Ben Khaveild    | 1     | 420        | 81  | 30                 |
| Om Maabed            | 2     | 403        | 73  | 29                 |
| Almegdad Ben Alaswad | 3     | 409        | 104 | 30                 |
| Alwaha               | 4     | 481        | 75  | 24                 |
| Subaiaa Bent Alharet | 5     | 431        | 107 | 38                 |
| Omaih Bent-Gaith     | 6     | 418        | 71  | 29                 |
| Abo Almehsen babetai | 7     | 415        | 88  | 27                 |
| Mubarak Ajaber       | 8     | 434        | 87  | 29                 |
| Anmar Ben Yaser      | 9     | 405        | 88  | 32                 |
| Shamlan Ben Ali      | 10    | 361        | 73  | 27                 |
| Alshauna Bent Akhare | 11    | 479        | 82  | 33                 |
| Rugdith              | 12    | 447        | 88  | 31                 |
| Abo Almehsen Alkhura | 13    | 376        | 86  | 31                 |
| Mashaan Alkhdir      | 14    | 429        | 73  | 34                 |
| Mushref              | 15    | 455        | 64  | 33                 |
| Baian                | 16    | 484        | 88  | 31                 |
| Om Atiah             | 17    | 493        | 73  | 26                 |
| Karalh               | 18    | 400        | 97  | 25                 |
| Maen Ben Zaedah      | 19    | 456        | 78  | 35                 |
| Alshwaik             | 20    | 399        | 96  | 26                 |

Table 6.7

An analysis of variance showed that there was no significant difference ( $P < 0.01$ ) between the mean scores of the pupils in the twenty schools. This suggests that no school effects on academic performance was found. i.e. school differences is zero.

### 6.5 The Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis

To investigate which variable has the greater effect upon pupils' achievement, a multiple correlation of grades against all the variables, and they with each other was conducted. The results of this are shown in table 6.8

**Table 6.8** Correlation.

|          | <b>Grades</b> | <b>Occup1</b> | <b>Educ1</b> | <b>Educ2</b> | <b>Children</b> | <b>Income</b> | <b>Occup2</b> |
|----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Grades   | 1.000         | 0.711         | 0.623        | 0.515        | -0.390          | 0.545         | 0.320         |
| Occup1   | 0.711         | 1.000         | 0.857        | 0.693        | -0.487          | 0.581         | 0.416         |
| Educ1    | 0.623         | 0.857         | 1.000        | 0.763        | -0.521          | 0.547         | 0.457         |
| Educ2    | 0.515         | 0.693         | 0.763        | 1.000        | -0.580          | 0.493         | 0.612         |
| Children | -0.390        | -0.487        | -0.521       | -0.580       | 1.000           | 0.253         | -0.361        |
| Income   | 0.545         | 0.581         | 0.547        | 0.493        | 0.253           | 1.000         | 0.395         |
| Occup2   | 0.320         | 0.416         | 0.457        | 0.612        | -0.361          | 0.395         | 1.000         |

These results show that the occup level of father is highly positively correlated with the final grades of children ( 0.711 ) which means that students with high occupation level of father are expected to perform better than other students. As far as educational level of the father is concerned we see that there is also a positive correlation between the level of fathers' education and their children's achievement ( 0.623 ). Also the fathers' education is highly correlated with occupation ( 0.857 ), which is normal in Middle Eastern countries in general. The mothers' education also

shows a strong positive correlation with children's grades or achievement ( 0.515 ). However, the effects of this correlation are less than the effects of fathers' education.

At the same time the mothers' education also shows a strong correlation with their occupation ( 0.612 ), which is also normal in Middle Eastern countries in general. Table 6.8 shows that the mothers' education is strongly related to the fathers' education ( 0.763 ), which suggests that highly educated men tend to marry educated women. This is also a feature of the Middle Eastern society, especially in social traditions in Kuwaiti society. Ameen (1983 ) indicated that one of the changes that was common to social change in Gulf Societies was the change in the citizen's ideas about choosing their partners so that they were of the same educational level. The question still arises as to which of these factors has the greatest influence upon pupils' academic performance. To test for this a regression model was constructed (see Appendix F ). The results indicated that about 50 % of the variance was accounted for by the father's occupation level in STEP 1. STEP 2 gave simple average of the family income factor which represents 2.6% only. This means that at least 40% approximately may represent the father education factor. This may be due to the strong connection between the father education factor and the father occupation factor, which was = 0.857 in simple correlation. Thus, 90% approximately represents the average of the father occupation correlation and the father education correlation with the educational achievement.

## **6.6 Summary:**

From the previous results in this chapter it is clear that there was a significant relationship between the educational achievement of the pupils in the intermediate stage in Kuwait and their fathers' occupation, fathers' education, mother's education, family income, family size but not the mother's occupation. Also, the results clearly

indicate that a well educated family with high level occupations (father), having a high income, and a small number of children, may lead to high educational achievement. On the other hand, the results proved that there was no significant relationship between the educational achievement of the students and the inter-school differences. By using a multiple regression test and step wise, this allows us to determine that the key variable factors are the father's occupation and father's education. Thus, these two variables have a significant role in the educational achievement of students in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **THE INTERVIEWS**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

From the statistical results it was clear that the father's occupation and the father's education was the factor which had most influence on the children's educational achievement. The question here is: how could the influence of the key variables operate inside the family and how do they affect the children's achievement? Using qualitative methodology represented by interviews and studying the deviant cases seemed the right way to answer these questions. This chapter is an analysis of the interviews with the students ( from high and low achievement levels ), their parents, their teachers, and their social specialists. The researcher hopes that this analysis of these interviews may help to illuminate the effect of the socio-economic factors which affect the lifestyles and then the educational achievements of the students.

Four random groups were constructed as a means of illuminating the effect of the socio-economic factors. A high achieving group composed of ten students ( five male and five female ) and their parents; a low achieving group composed of ten students ( five male and five female ) and their parents; a teacher group consisting of ten teachers ( five male and five female ); and a social specialist group consisting of ten social specialists ( five male and five female ). With regard to the interview questions themselves each section of the interviews contained important points which had been found from the pilot study. There is no developed tradition of interviewing in Kuwait, that is the process of the interview is an unusual one and people are uncertain of its purpose and appropriate behaviour. The purpose of most interpersonal exchanges outside of the family in this society is for official business. In

such situations the individual behaves very cautiously, and information is not freely volunteered.

Although great attempts were made to explain the function of these research interviews, old patterns of behaviour are still easily observable in the transcripts.

There was a general reluctance on the part of respondents to expand on their answers which look curiously stereotyped by Western standards. The researcher interprets this as a function of three factors. First, the cultural mores in an Islamic country like Kuwait which do not encourage the discussion of personal information with strangers. Secondly, the general worry about officialdom prying into circumstances which do not concern them. Thirdly, the unusual setting for the interview in the respondents' home, often with both husband and wife present together- an unusual situation in Kuwait. Finally, in the case of some of the respondents who were poorly educated, a lack of facility to express themselves clearly and fluently on these delicate matters.

The researcher divided his analysis into the following points:-

- The relationship between the parents and their children and how the children were treated.
- The parents' supervision inside and outside the home.
- The home atmosphere and environment.
- The relationship between the family and the school.
- The school's treatment of the low achieving students and its communication with parents.

(Table 7.1) presents some information about the parents of the high achieving group and the low achieving group.

## **7.2 The relationship between the parents and their children :-**

### **7.2.1 Parents Listening To Their Children**

When the students were asked the first question "Do your parents listen to what you say about schooling?", eight students out of ten from the high achieving group chose "always" while two students chose "usually". Most of the students who chose "always" indicated that their parents listened to every word they said about schooling ( whether it was a big or small thing ). One example of what a student said follows:

Abdullah : "My parents always listen to what I am saying about schooling, the big and the small things, and they always ask about the monthly essays, my learning and what my teachers are teaching me . In addition they give me their advice and listen to any problems I may face at school in general. "

Some of these students indicated the quality of parents' listening. For example,

Layla : " I always found that my parents are excellent listeners."

One example of the students who chose "usually" is Ahmed. He justified his choice in these words.

Ahmed : " My parents usually listen to everything I say about school at lunch and in dinner time when all the family are together in the same place. Although my father may be busy all the time he always tries to be in the house at those times.

When the parents of the high achieving group were asked the same question, nine out of ten parents in high achieving group chose "always" and only one parent chose "usually". They explained that they listened to everything their children said even if they were busy. For example, Mohammed's father. He explained his choice in these words.

Mohammed's father: " I always listen to what Mohammed says about schooling when I come home at lunch and, dinner time and in the evening, but when I am busy working in the afternoon I always ask my wife to do this, so she can give me a clear

picture about Mohammed and if there are any problems we try to solve them together."

There was an agreement between the parents and their children regarding the choice of "always" and "usually" to the above question in the high achieving group. This may mean that good listening on the part of the parents has an important role in the life quality of high achievement students.

In contrast to the above, six students out of ten from the low achieving group chose "sometimes" when they answered the question, and four students chose "seldom". The dominant reason in their explanation was, " our parents are always busy ". There are many reasons for this as the students indicated. For example, Khaled mentioned that the reason is the polygamy or the divorce of his parents. He explained his choice in these words.

Khaled: " My mother is always busy with the house-work. My father divorced my mother and he doesn't even come to see us now because he is married to another wife."

Other students mentioned that the reason their parents are too busy is because of their work. Monera was one of these students, she explained her choice in these words.

Monera: " My father is always busy. He is a soldier in the army. Sometimes he has to stay two or three days at his work, and when he returns home he spends all his time watching TV, especially sports programmes. He doesn't like any one to speak to him when he is watching, and if he has free time he spends it in the Dewaniya with his friends until midnight or 1 a.m. My mother is always very busy with my brothers and sisters in the home."

Two students ( Adell and Bader ) mentioned that their parents did not listen to what they said about schooling because they did not care about schooling ( the two parents are illiterate ) .



Three students ( Yehaya, Nawal and Nurah ) mentioned that their parents "sometimes" listen to what they say but without interest. For example, Nurah: " My father sometimes asks me to complete my homework but when I speak to him about schooling he says : OK Nurah I have no time now, and sometimes he answers me but without interest."

When the researcher asked the parents in the low-achieving group about listening to their children, two out of ten parents chose "sometimes", three parents chose "seldom", five parents chose "never" which means that the parental listening in this group may not have a role in the children's lives. The parents also talked about their being busy.

Nawal's father who chose "sometimes" explained his choice in these words:

" I am always busy but sometimes I listen to Nawal if I have time"

The rest of the parents who chose "never" explained their choice in these words:

Bader's father : " In fact there are no dialogues or conversations between Bader and me or between me and the rest of my children because I am always at work especially when I have overtime and I spend my spare time in the Dewaniya, most times until 1 a.m." Last year Bader was out of his house for three days and his father did not know about it.

Naser's father who also chose "never" explained his choice in these words:

" I am busy in the morning at my work and in the evening I am usually busy with my new family because I am married to another wife."

It is clear that the listening in the low achieving group tended to be less frequent and when it did occur, the listening was without interest. The students of the low achieving group gave some reasons for the lack of their parents' listening, for example being busy working or with the family, and illiteracy.

From the above we found that parents' listening always or usually happened in the high achieving group as the children and their parents in the high group mentioned. We also found that the quality of parents' listening in the high achieving group was good, as interpreted by the children and their parents. We found also that in spite of the business demands of some parents in the high achieving group they listened to their children in their free time or they gave this function over to their wives. This indicated the importance of listening in relation to the parents in this group. In contrast we found listening in the low achieving group only sometimes or seldom happened and if it occurred, the listening appeared to be without interest.

It is clear that if there is little listening or if there is listening without interest on the part of the parents, as in the low achieving group, this may lead to some problems in the whole relationship, in the exchange of ideas, and in the dialogue between the parents and the students. This in turn may lead to lack of recognition of the difficulties and the problems that children face in their school and in their own life. This can result in parents not being aware of their children problems. There is also a lack of experience exchange that might help the children to surmount the difficulties that they face. This in turn may lead to low achievement. In contrast, regular and good quality parental listening may help to solve any problems and difficulties that the children face and may be considered as one factor responsible for their superior academic performance.

Turkey (1974 ) noticed in his study of the correlation between the parental relations with their children and the children's educational achievement: that the high achieving student compared with the low achieving student explained that their parents usually participated with them in their ideas and listened to them with interest.

The students and the parents in the low achieving group justified the lack of listening by parents as being due to involvement with other things. Some of the reasons given included polygamy, divorce, difficulty in jobs, and lack of attention which came from the illiteracy of parents. The researcher noted that the above factors were repeated by the teachers' group and the social specialists' group when they explained the problems with the low achievement students which means that these reasons may have a role in low achievement. If we look at the social situation of parents in the high achieving group and in the low achieving group of our present study (see Table 7.1), we find that in the low achieving group there are five cases of polygamy ( two cases out of five are also separated by divorce ), one case in which the father was separated by death, and only four cases in which the parents are living with each other. However, in the high achieving group the parents are living with each other in every case.

Hasean (1978 ) in her study regarding the reasons for polygamy and divorce in Kuwaiti society found that :

- \* There is a relationship between education, divorce and polygamy in which as the education level decreases the average for divorce and polygamy increases .
- \* There is a relationship between occupation, divorce and polygamy, in which the highest average for divorce and polygamy is in those who work in middle ranking careers such as clerical work.
- \* There is a relationship between education and occupation, divorce and polygamy in which most divorce and polygamy cases are amongst those who are illiterate and who work in middle ranking careers and services.
- \* There is a relationship between the economic, social levels, divorce and polygamy in which divorce and polygamy cases tend to increase in those who have low income and it tends to decrease in those who have a high income.

Gardner (1982 ) indicated that the reason for the low achievement of children whose parents are illiterate may be related to the parents being busy in their daily work.

In contrast, the parents who are educated are more stable in their life and this may have a positive effect on their children's educational achievement.

It is clear that for the parents of the low achieving group who lack economic stability, have overtime, have polygamy or divorce, and are illiterate, these factors may have a role in making their daily life busy which prevents them in listening to their children and this has an effect on the children's achievement. The opposite is true in the case of the high achieving group.

### **7.2.2 Parents' Advice to their Children**

When the researcher asked the question " Do you ask your parents for advice about school work? " Three students out of ten from the high achieving group chose to answer "always", four students chose "usually", two students chose "sometimes", and one student chose "seldom". One example of the students who chose "always" and "usually" is Abdulla. He justified his choice by these words :

Abdullah : " When I need some references or so on for my school work, my parents and the rest of the family are always there to help me find it from the public library or elsewhere. "

The two students ( Mohammed and Fatema ) who chose "sometimes" and Salem who chose "seldom" explained their choices by saying that their parents encourage them to be self-dependent and self-confident e.g. when they face any problem they try to solve it themselves to begin with but after that if they do not know how to solve the problem they can ask their parents to help them, for example,

Fatema : " My parents encourage my self-dependence and self-confidence when I face any problem but if I can't find a solution to the problem I usually go to them to get their advice."

When the parents of the high achieving group were asked, " Does your child ask for advice about things in her / his school work?", seven out of ten parents chose "always", one parent chose "usually", and three parents chose "sometimes". The parents who chose "always" and "usually" explained their choice in these words: Layla's father : " Layla always asks me or her mother about anything she finds difficult in her school work. She always takes our advice not only concerning her school work but also about everything in life in general". The parents who chose "sometimes" explained that their children ask them for advice but only after trying to solve their problems by themselves.

It is clear from the answers of "always" and "usually" by this group that there is a dialogue between the students and their parents.

When pupils in the low achieving group answered the same question, three out of ten of the interviewed students chose "sometimes", three chose "seldom", and four chose "never". Naser, Hala and Nura who chose "sometimes" explained that the reason for that choice is due to their parents' busy daily life and their lack of education. An example of these students was Hala. She justified her choice in these words.

Hala : " Sometimes I ask my parents if there is something they are able to read like 'Koran' ( the Holy Koran ) because they didn't complete their education."

The rest of the students in the low achieving group who chose seldom or never explained the reason for their choice as due to their parent low level of education, illiteracy and busy daily life. Monera was one of these students. She explained her choice in these words.

Monera : " because he is always busy working and also he didn't complete his education"

When the researcher asked the parents in the low achieving group, " Does your child ask for advice about things in his / her school works ? One parent out of ten chose "sometimes", two parents chose "seldom", and seven parents chose "never".

The same reasons are repeated ( low level of education, being busy, illiteracy ) when the parents explained their choice.

Monera' father: " I think the reason is because I am always outside the home in my work or in the " Dewaniya "

Hala's father : " Hala only asks me about simple things because I didn't complete my education "

When we compare the answers of the two groups we find that the answers for the high achieving group were centered on "usually" and "always". Whereas they were centered on "sometimes", "seldom" and "never" in the low achieving group. It is clear from the explanations of the high achieving group that there is a dialogue and interaction between the students and their family which is lacking in the low achieving group. This is significant because as Gardner (1982) said, the occurrence of the constructive interaction between the children and their parents influenced the children's performance in school.

It is clear also that the parents in the high achieving group encouraged independence and self-confidence in their children which was not seen in the low achieving group. This may be due to low level of education, illiteracy, and the busy daily lives of the parents. Turkey (1974 ) found in his study that there is a significant correlation between self-confidence and achievement. We can say that the dialogue, interaction, and building of independence, all of which happens in the high achieving group, may give students more knowledge and experience from their parents which in turn helps them with their school work and which motivates them to reach high levels of achievement. The opposite can be said to be true for the low achieving group.

### **7.2.3 Parents' Punishment of Their Children in Relation to Schooling**

The researcher asked the students about punishment; the exact question was " Do your parents punish you if you do badly in school?"

Nine out of ten students from the high achieving group chose "never", while one chose "seldom". In contrast, three out of ten students in the low achieving group chose "always", one student chose "usually", four students chose "sometimes", and two students chose "never". When the researcher asked the parents this question about punishment; " Do you punish your child if he / she does badly in school? "

ten out of ten parents in the high achieving group chose "never", whereas two parents in the low achieving group chose "always", one parent chose "usually", three parents chose "sometimes", two parents chose "seldom", and only two parents chose "never".

The students who chose "never" in the high achieving group gave reasons for their choice by saying that their parents always used a more analytical method to solve their children's problems in school. For example, Abdulazeez : " If I do bad work in school my parents never punish me, instead they always try to understand the reasons for this bad work and then all of us together find a suitable solution to it."

Salem who chose "seldom" explained his choice in these words: " My parents used to scold me when I did bad work in school at the beginning but after that they began to ask me about the reasons for this problem and then they tried to help me deal with it."

The parents in the high achieving group explained their answers in these words:

Ahmeds' father : " I don't use punishment, especially physical forms of punishment, with Ahmed and the rest of my children. I treat Ahmed as a friend. If there is a failure in his school work I always try to discuss with him the reasons for this failure and then we put forward some ideas which we think may help to solve this failure.

Sometimes I leave him to apply these points himself under my supervision."

It is clear that the parents in the high achieving group never use punishment; instead they use a more analytical method for dealing with their children's failures at school.

The students in the low achieving group mentioned that the physical punishment and verbal reprimands prevail in their parents' punishment.

Yahya : " My parents always beat me and say things like { you are a dog or a donkey}when I do bad work at school; for that reason I do my best to avoid bringing my monthly certificate home to them."

Hala : " My mother usually hits me on my face or on my body and she also screams at me. My father does the same. I don't know why they don't help me instead of doing that "

Ahlam's mother in the low achieving group added to her answer in these words:

" I always beat her and I ask her brother to beat her too, but I don't know why the beating has not brought about any results yet."

Consequently, it may be that using a more analytical method to solve the problems in the high achieving group may be the result of the high level of education of the parents, thus they are able to help to analyse the problems of their children in a constructive way to help their children to attain high achievement levels. This was very clear from the explanations of the children and their parents. In contrast, we found that the parents in the low achieving group used anger and physical punishment to solve their children's problems.

The fact the parents use verbal abuse and physical punishment in this group may be due to the low educational standard of those parents. Such punishment has a negative effects on their children's performance, as can be seen from what the parents say about this treatment.

Al-Shaikh (1989 ) indicated that a mother from the middle classes has the ability to create hopes for her children and she feels this can have an effect on their



performance and help attain high achievement levels, whereas a mother who has low education feels that she has little effect on her children's performance, so she tries to use bodily beating because she thinks that this method will have more effect on her children. But as we know this usually has a negative reaction. Lenc (1993) found that most students, even those with a strong intrinsic motivation, are more highly motivated by extrinsic rewards and goals.

#### **7.2.4 Parental Satisfaction and Encouragement**

When the researcher asked the students, " Do your parents tell you that they are happy if you do well in school tests?" nine students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "always", one student chose "usually". In contrast, only one student in the low achieving group chose "usually", three students chose "sometimes", three students chose "seldom", and three student chose "never".

The parents were also asked the question: " Do you tell your child that you are happy if he or she doing well in school tests." Ten parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "always". In contrast, two parents out of ten in the low achieving group chose "usually", five parents chose "sometimes", two parents chose "seldom", and one parent chose "never". An example of a student in the high achieving group was Nura. She replied, " My parents are always happy when I do well in school; they feel proud of me in front of their friends. They also explain to my brother and sister that when they work hard like me they will be successful."

The parents in the high achieving group who chose "always" expressed their choice. For example, Abdulazeez's father answered: " I and my wife always try to show our happiness for our children and praise them because we think that this will encourage them to do better and better even if they do make mistakes sometimes. "

It is clear that happiness is always expressed and encouragement always occurs in the high achieving group.

In the case of low achieving group all the students who chose "usually", "seldom", and "never" did not give any comments, but the students who chose "sometimes" explained that their parents may say 'OK' or 'good' to them but they do not show happiness nor offer encouragement. An example of student in this low achieving group was Khaled. He replied, " My mother always says I want you to get the top marks. One day I got 16 out of 20 in science and was so happy but when I showed her the marks she said : "Good, but I want the highest marks, this is not what I want"" Eight parents in the low achieving group did not give any comments on their choice. Only Monera's and Hala's parents explained their choice. Monera's father who chose "never" explained : " I don't show my happiness because I know that even if she has succeeded this month she will fail next month because she is lazy." Hala's father : " Sometimes I say to her 'good', 'OK', 'well done'."

It is clear that happiness and encouragement are only sometimes or seldom expressed in the low achieving group.

When we compare the two groups we find the difference between them is very clear, the students and parents in the high achieving group centred their answers on "always" but in the low achieving group the answers were centred on "sometimes".

We can see the atmosphere of happiness, praise, and encouragement in the high achieving group even when the children fail a few times.

But in the low achieving group there is a definite lack of the types of behaviour described above. This is appropriate with some studies, like, Seginer (1983 ) found in his research that middle-class parents continue to encourage their children to have high educational expectations even when the children get low marks. Moreover the parental expectations of the children in the low achieving group were high in an absolute sense and this may lead to frustration in the children. The frustration may

have arisen in Khaled ( of the low achieving group) who got good marks in science but did not get the happiness, encouragement and praise he expected from his mother. The frustration that may have arisen in the students in this group has a role in low achievement. In contrast, the praise, happiness, and encouragement is an incentive to high achievement.

Lareau (1987 ) noticed that lower-class parents are more likely to be discouraged when their children's marks are poor. Scott- Jones (1982 ) showed that the best situation may be for parental expectation to be not simply high in an absolute sense but to be near to the child's performance.

#### **7.2.5 Parents' Planning for the Future Career of their Children:**

When the students were asked the question : " Do your parents talk with you about your plans for your future career?" ten students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "always", but in the low achieving group, three students out of ten chose "sometimes" and seven students chose "never".

When the parents were asked : " Do you talk with your child about her/his plans for future career?" ten parents out of the ten in the high achieving group chose "always", whereas in the low achieving group one parent chose "sometimes", four parents chose "seldom", and five parents chose "never".

The students in the high achieving group mentioned in their explanation that the dialogue between them and their parents about their future career is on-going all the time and their parents always give them the freedom to choose what career they want to follow in the future. For example,

Mohammed : " There is always a dialogue between me and my parents about my future career. Also they always give me the freedom to choose my future career. In fact I want to be an engineer. My father always encourages my choice and says, 'I want you to complete your study and get a Ph.D.'

The parents in the high achieving group expressed their feelings on this topic, for example,

Ahmed's father : " Ahmed wants to be a doctor like his brother Khasan. In fact I always give the freedom of choice to all my children and with their mother always encourage their choice. Also there is a continuing discussion between us and our children about their future careers ".

It was noticed that students in the high achieving group answered the above questions with self-confidence, but the opposite was true of the students in the low achieving group. The students who chose "sometimes" in the low achieving group mentioned in their explanations that sometimes there is a discussion between them and their parents but their parents do not give them the freedom to chose what they want, for example, Yahya said, " Sometimes my father wants me to be an army officer, but he doesn't agree with my wishes to be a technician."

The rest of the students in the low achieving group who chose "never" explained that the reasons for their answers have to do with parental lack of time and interest, for example,

Nurah : " There are no discussions between me and my parents, in fact, I want to be a poet but they don't encourage me in that. One day I told my father that I wanted to be a poet, he screamed at me and in a mocking way that before I tried to be a poet I had to learn first"

The parents of the low achieving group explained their choices in these words, for example; Yahya's father who chose "sometimes" explained, " In fact there is no dialogue between me and Yahya but I want him to be an army officer and he doesn't agree with what I want him to be."

The rest of the parents in the low achieving group explained that the reasons for their choice were due to their work commitments, for example, Khaled's mother : " There

is not enough time to discuss this subject because I am always busy inside or outside the house."

Hala's father, who explained that he thought his daughter's future career was not important for him expresses his choice in these words.

Hala's father : " I thought the future career of Hala is not important for me."

If we look at the above we find that the majority of the students and parents in the high achieving group answered the question with "always", in addition they mentioned that there is always a opportunity for dialogue about future careers that they always allow their children the freedom to choose this future career and they encourage this choice as the children and their parents in the high achieving group indicated. While the opposite is the case in the low achieving group where their answers are centered on "never" and "seldom". The students and their parents in the low achieving group justified the lack of discussions by reference to the business and to lack of interest. This may come from the cultural background of uneducated families who know little about the real value of knowledge. Also the students mentioned that their parents mocked them if they talked with them about their desire for a future career.

A few students in the low achieving group who chose "sometimes" mentioned that sometimes there is a discussion between them and their parents but they added that there is no freedom to choose their future career. Instead their parents suggest to them low careers which do not need a high level of education, careers like army officer and any jobs available after finishing intermediate school.

In fact, the presence of a dialogue regarding careers between students and their parents plays a major role in increasing the communication, understanding, and recognizing the wishes of each side. Such a dialogue is necessary in order to consolidate and encourage careers, also if the dialogue is accompanied by the

freedom of choice, this may lead to greater motivation for achieving high performance at school.

Turkey (1974 ) noticed that the presence of a dialogue between the students and their parents accompanied by freedom of choice has a big role in high achievement. Again the presence of parental involvement and children's recognition that it exists, and the encouragement by the parents of their children as high achievers has a major role in producing success at school. In addition, Etaugh (1984 ) reported in his study that as a result of dual parental involvement, the children showed an increase in performance at school. The opposite, the presence of parents' mocking and lack of interest may have a negative effect on the student's achievement in the low achieving group.

#### **7.2.6 Parents' Expectations and Aspirations Regarding their Children's**

##### **Education and Kind of Job :**

When the students were asked " How much schooling do you want to have?" ten out of ten students from the high achieving group chose "get a higher education than the first degree". In contrast, only one student out of ten in the low achieving group chose "get a higher education than the first degree", while one student chose "get a degree from the University", three students chose "get a diploma from college", four students chose "finish secondary school only", and one student chose "finish intermediate school only".

When the parents were asked " How much schooling do you want your child to get?", ten parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "get higher education than the first degree". In contrast, only two parents in the low achieving group chose "get a higher education than the first degree", two parents chose "get a degree from the University only", one parent chose "get a diploma from college only", and five parents chose "finish secondary school only".

The students in the high achieving group explained that their parents have a role in their choice for a higher education, for example,

Abdulazeez : " I always hope to get a Master's and a Ph.D.. My father has a big role in my aspiration and has always pushed me to higher studies. My father always says to me that he spent many years in Pakistan and France and was far away from his homeland just to get a higher education.

The parents of the high achieving group mentioned in their explanation that high hopes and aspirations were the main reason for their choice, for example,

Salem's father : " In fact my life's dream is to see my children get a higher education than the first degree and then to get a highly placed job."

The students in the low achieving group gave different explanations for their choices, answering the question in a few words. Naser who chose "get a higher education than the first degree" explained his choice in these words: " I thought everyone wanted this."

Bader who chose "get a University degree" said: " I don't have any specific aims until now, but I thought it would be good to get a University degree."

The three students ( Ahlam, Monera, Nurah ) who chose "get a diploma" explained that they wanted to be teachers. The rest of the students who chose "secondary" and 'intermediate' only mentioned that the reason for their choice was to get a job, for example,

Adel : " I want to work after finishing intermediate school to help my family."

The parents of the low achieving group also gave different explanations, answering the question in few words. For example, Nawal's parents who chose "get a higher education than the first degree" and ( Ahlam, Nurahs' parents ) who chose "get a degree from the University" explained their choice in these words:

Ahlam's mother : " To help her to get a job."

Nurah's father : " I think the University is better."

Most of the rest of the parents who chose "diploma" or "secondary school only" mentioned that the reason for this was to help their children to get any job after

finishing the diploma or secondary school. But Hala's father explained the reason for his choice was to make his daughter stay at home afterwards.

Again when the parents were asked, " How much schooling do you really think your child can achieve?", nine parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "get a higher education than the first degree", and one parent chose, "get a degree from University". In contrast three out of ten parents in the low achieving group chose, "get a degree from University only", one parent chose "get a diploma from college only", five parents chose "finish secondary school only", and one parent chose "finish intermediate school only". This means that the parents' expectation in the high achieving group is higher than in the low achieving group.

Furthermore when the parents were asked, " What job do you want your child to have when he/ she finishes his/ her education ?", five parents in the high achieving group chose "University teacher ( Ph.D )", four parents chose "doctors", and one parent chose "engineer". In contrast, five parents in the low achieving group chose "clerical and related work" ( one clerk, one secretary, two teachers in elementary school, one officer ) two parents chose "service workers" ( one technician, one nurse ) and one parent did not want his daughter to work. In sum, the aspiration for the future careers of the children of parents of the high achieving group was high and necessitated a higher education; the opposite was true in the low achieving group.

From the above we find that the high aspiration of the parents in the high achieving group affects their children's directions, and motivation to be academically successful. The picture becomes clear through the words of the parents of the high achieving group, who explain that the motive to choose a higher education for their children was to help their children realize their aspirations in life, or to see their children in high jobs or to realize their own dream through their children which they had not been



able to realize in their own lives. Cochrane and Jamison (1982 ) found that parents' aspiration for their children's education was the main predictor of their educational achievement. In contrast, the explanation of the parents and students in the low achieving group was distinguished by short sentences of a few words and a lack of aspiration to achieve a higher education. Although some parents and students in the low achieving group chose to get a first University degree or higher they did not give a clear explanation of why. The rest of the parents and students in the low achieving groups who chose diploma, secondary, and intermediate completion focused on finding any kind of job after finishing the above education. This may be connected with the old traditions of the uneducated Kuwaiti family.

It was clear that the traditional cultural level and the low economic level of the families in the low achieving group has a role in their satisfaction with the completion of a middle range education and the finding of any job. In addition, there was some parental domination regarding the future in the low achieving group as in Hala's case whose father wanted her to stay at home after finishing secondary school and not work ( this kind of domination is characterized by some Kuwaiti families who have a low level of education ) .

In other words, it is clear that the social motivation for achievement was to some extent missing in the low achieving group and this leads the students to be satisfied with their low achievement. The high motivation in the high achieving group creates the opposite results.

Ballantine (1983 ) records in his study that dropping out is a possibility for the child who is in a lower social and cultural level. That is they may not complete their higher education because of the lack of motivation.

When we see the parents' explanations we find that in the high achieving group the parents' expectation for their children to achieve high education was high but the

opposite was true in low achieving group in which six parents expected their children to get only a secondary education or less and no one expected their child to get a higher education than the first degree. Similarly, Marjoribanks (1976 ) found a high correlation between parents' educational/ occupational expectations and students' achievement in communication and in maths.

Again when the parents were asked about the future careers of their children, the parents of the high achieving group expected "high level jobs", for example, (University teacher, doctor, engineer ) which need high academic achievement by their children and which are congruent with their aspirations. The opposite is true of parents of the low achieving group who expected a variety of careers for their children, but always of a "middle level" ( clerk, secretary, teacher in elementary school, and officer) or lower (service workers like technician, nurse ) and these career choices should agree with the parents' aspirations. Nkinyangi (1980 p. 267 ) indicated in his study that " parents of repeaters in school and dropouts had lower career aspirations for their children than parents of successful children."

#### **7.2.7 Parents' Treatment of Children**

The students were asked " How would you describe your relationship with your parents" and they were given a scale of one to five: one being "unhappy" and five being "happy".

Ten out of ten students in the high achieving group chose "five" regarding their father, and also "five" regarding their mother. In contrast, two students in the low achieving group chose "five" for their father and "five" for their mother, three students chose "four" for their father and "five" for their mother, two students chose "three" for the father and "three" for the mother, one student chose "one" for the father and "four" for the mother, one student chose "five" for the father and "four" for the mother, and one student chose "four" for the father and "four" for the mother.

The students in the high achieving group mentioned that good treatment from their parents and the provision of all that they need for scholastic help, encouragement, confidence, or quietness had a role in their feelings of contentment with their parents. For example, Fatma : " My parents are very kind and sympathetic toward me. They always ask me if I need any help in school work, and they always give me encouragement and confidence."

The students in the low achieving group gave either no explanation or were often negative about their parents. Adel and Ahlam who chose "five" for both their father and mother did not give any comments; this was also true for Bader who gave "five" to his mother and "four" for his father. The rest of the students in the low achieving group mentioned that bad treatment and the lack of support were the most important factors for their choice.

Khaled who gave "one" to his father and "four" to his mother explained his choice in these words: " I chose "one" for my father but in fact I think less than one would be better because he never speaks to me about anything and he has absolutely no interest in me; and I chose only "four" for my mother because she is always upset with me, sometimes she asks me to study but doesn't help me with my studies."

Yahya said: " I chose "four" for my father because he is always upset with me and sometimes he beats me, and I also chose "four" for my mother because she always refuses to give me the freedom to do what I want to do even in the holidays."

It is clear that what the students gain in the high achieving group from good treatment and from adequate provision for their needs is not forthcoming in the low achieving group.

When the students were asked, " If you have a problem you need to talk over with someone, to whom do you go most of the time?", four students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "both parents", three chose "mother", two chose "father" and

one student chose "sister". In the low achieving group three students chose "both parents", two students chose "mother", one student chose "sister", two students chose "other relatives", and two students chose "others". When the students in the low achieving group who chose "other relatives" or "others" were asked about the reasons for their choice, they said that this was because they found they received good treatment and got interest from those people.

The students in the low achieving group mentioned that the reason for choosing those people instead of their parents was because their parents did not show enough interest in them or provide good treatment which led them to find other people to help them. In contrast we found that all the students in the high achieving group except one chose a parent.

When the students were asked: " Do you receive respect inside your house?", ten students out of ten from the high achieving group chose "always". In contrast, one student out of ten in the low achieving group chose "usually", seven students chose "sometimes", one student chose "seldom", and one student chose "never".

The students in the high achieving group talked about respect in the home as below.

Walid : " I always receive respect from all my family. They always speak to me respectfully and they teach me to treat my brothers and sisters with respect"

The students in the low achieving group commented towards them in the following ways:

Nawal : " Most of the time my parents don't respect me instead they beat me"

Yahya who chose "seldom" explained his choice in these words:

Yahya : " My parents and my brother show me respect only if they want something from me"

It was clear from what the students in the low achieving group said that the relationship between them and their parents was weak and unhappy. A number of the explanations which were given indicated the existence of these weak relationships.

First, the lack of listening and interest on the part of the parents. Secondly, the bad treatment they receive. Thirdly, the lack of supplying what the children need.

Fourthly, the lack of respect.

Such an unsuitable home atmosphere probably affects these students' academic achievements. In contrast, it was clear from what the students in the high achieving group said, that the relationship between them and their parents was strong and happy. The reasons for this which the researcher thought were important were: first, the children were given everything they needed. Second, the good treatment they received from their family. Third, the respect they received from their parents.

The good relationship between the students in the high achieving group and their parents gives the students the freedom to work in a good home atmosphere and is likely to help the students do well at school. The opposite would be true for the low achieving group.

Morcy (1988 ) mentioned that there is a correlation between achievement motivation in children and teenagers and their perception of their parents' treatment of them in childhood. He found that the achievement motivation increases in children who perceive that their parents accept them and who receive good treatment from their parents, whereas it decreases in children who perceive rejection and ostracism from their parents.

### **7.3 Parents' Supervision Inside and Outside the Home**

#### **7.3.1 Parents' Aspirations and the Importance of their Children getting Good Marks**

When the students were asked " How important is it for your parents that you get good marks in school?", ten students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "very important". In contrast, three students out of ten in the low achieving group chose fairly "important", five students chose 'not important", and two students chose "he/she doesn't care"

The students in the high achieving group who chose "very important" commented on their choice as shown in the following examples: some students mentioned that getting good marks in the school is very important for their parents, for example, Mohammed : " When my parents notice that my marks in a subject are not so good even if it's by only one mark, they discuss this with me and after that one of my parents visits the school and discusses it with my teacher and the social specialist in order to find out how to help me improve. In fact my parents always want me to get high marks."

The students in the low achieving group commented on their choices as well. For example, Khaled, Naser, and Ahlam, who chose "fairly important", explained their choice in these words:

Naser : " When I get low marks my parents always punish me and beat me."

Ahlam : " My mother always asks me to study my subjects but she doesn't ask me about the subjects that I fail in."

The students in the low achieving group who chose "not important" explained that their parents don't care about high marks but they just want them to pass. For example,

Nawal : " My parents told me that they just want me just to pass and they don't want me to get high marks."

The students in the low achieving group who chose "their parent don't care" explained their choice in these words:

Hala : " they don't care about this subject"

Nurah : " They are always busy"

When the parents were asked " How important is it for you that your child gets high marks in school?", ten parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "very important" . In contrast, two parents in the low achieving group chose "fairly important", seven parents chose "not important", and one parent chose "I don't care".

The parents in the high achieving group said that they always do their best to encourage their children to get high marks.

Ahmed's father : " This point is not only important to me but also is one of my objectives in life. I always hope to see my children getting high marks in school like their mother and I did when we were at school. For that reason I always do my best to help them and encourage them."

Layla's father : " I always discuss it with Layla if I see a decrease in her marks in any subject, even if it's by only half a mark, in order to help her. I always want my children to get high marks."

The researcher noticed that the parents in the low achieving group commented on their choice with very few words.

The two parents who chose "fairly important":

Khaled's mother : " to help himself "

Ahlam's mother : " because success is important"

The rest of the parents who chose "not important" or "I don't care" mentioned that what was important for them was not to get high marks but just to pass. For example, Nawal's father: "I only want her to pass".

Bader's father who chose "I don't care" said : " I don't care about this subject"

It is clear that in general the parents of the low achieving group only want their children to pass and they do not care about high marks or distinctions. On the other hand, it is also clear that obtaining high marks is important for the parents of the high achieving group, and that they were all interested in seeing the evidence of this success. In contrast getting high marks is not required by or is not of any interest to the parents of the low achieving group. Seven parents in the low achieving group agreed that their children getting high marks was not important to them, they said in a few words that they only wanted their children to pass, and their desire for their children to achieve success was not as clear as in the high achieving group. Also one

parent and two students in the low achieving group explained that the parents do not care about getting high marks. It seems clear that the lack of interest in getting high marks on the parts of the parents in the low achieving group may weaken the motivation of the students to give a high performance and instead they are satisfied with low achievement. The reverse also seems to be the case in the high achieving group.

Gesten, Scher, and Cowen (1978 ) in their conclusion indicated that students from homes characterised by low parental interest in education had more severe learning problems and less success than children from homes with family pressure to succeed. The researcher noticed from the students' explanations that encouragement and parental aspirations do have a role in achieving high marks. The aspirations of parents in the high achieving group were high and not only limited to their children passing, they wanted their children to get high marks and reach a high achievement level.

It seems clear that parents' aspirations and encouragement have a big role in helping students to get high marks and high achievement levels. This is similar to Shoeib ( 1982 ), who found a strong relationship between the educational achievement of children and parents' aspirations towards school.

### **7.3.2 Parents and Their Children's Homework**

When the students were asked " Does either of your parents ask questions about your school work and homework?

Five students out of ten in high achieving group chose "always", four students chose "usually", and one student chose "sometimes". In contrast, one student out of ten in the low achieving group chose "usually", four students chose "sometimes", four students chose "seldom", and one student chose "never".



The students in the high achieving group who chose "always" said that their parents always asked them about schoolwork and homework, and they always discussed with them any difficulties they were facing. One example was Mohammed. He replied, " My parents always ask about my homework and my schoolwork, and they always try to guide me to organize my study time to do my homework. Also they discuss with me all the difficulties I face."

The students in the high achieving group who chose "usually" said that their parents have confidence in them. For example,

Salem : " My parents usually ask me about homework and schoolwork. They don't always ask me because they have confidence in me but, if I feel there are any problems which are too difficult for me to solve I go to them to get help ."

Haya, who chose "sometimes", explained her choice in these words:

" My father sometimes asks me about schoolwork and homework, they also help me if I face any problems but not all the time because my father has to divide his time between me and my sisters and brothers."

It is clear from the students' explanations in the high achieving group that they receive interest from their parents regarding schoolwork and homework. It is also clear that the trust between the students and their parents in this group was high. It was also found that some parents in this group give their time to observe and ask about their children's homework.

In the low achieving group Bader, who chose "usually", explained his choice in these words:

" Sometimes my father asks us ( himself, his sisters and brothers )to study"

It can be seen that although Bader chose "usually" when he explained his choice he used the word "sometimes".

Khaled, Monera, Hala, and Nurah in the low achieving group, who chose

"sometimes", explained their choice in only a few words:

Monera : " Sometimes my parents ask us ( herself, her sisters, and her brothers ) in general if we have done our homework or not but they show no real interest".

The students who chose "seldom" and "never" in the low achieving group explained that their parents seldom ask about their schoolwork or their homework because they are always busy. One of them was Yahya, he replied, " he seldom asks about my homework because he is always outside the home or in the "Dewaniya" and also my mother is always busy in the home"

It is clear from the answers of students in the low achieving group that their parents were too busy. These students receive little parental interest or input regarding homework. From the students' explanations the researcher did not find any of the confidence and help of parents that was found in the high achieving group.

When the parents were asked, "Do you ask your child questions about his/her homework?", six parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "always", three parents chose "usually", and one parent chose "sometimes". In contrast, three parents out of ten in the low achieving group chose "sometimes", four parents chose "seldom", and three parents chose "never".

One example of the parents who chose "always" was Abdulazeez's father. He explained his choice in these words: " Everyday I ask Abdulazeez about his schoolwork and homework. In fact we supervise his work but at the same time there is always confidence between me and him."

The parents who chose "usually", and Layla's father who chose "sometimes" in the high achieving group, indicated that the high confidence that they helped instil in their children was the reason for choosing "usually" or "sometimes". For example,

Waled's father : " I have encouraged confidence in Waled, for that reason I only usually ask him about his homework and not always. I do this to make sure he is all right".

It is clear from the parents' explanations in the high achieving group that they do concern themselves with their children's homework and schoolwork. It is also clear that the confidence between the parents and the children was high.

One example of the parents in the low achieving group who chose "sometimes" was Bader's father. He answered:" Sometimes I ask Bader about his schoolwork and homework but I am always busy working and sometimes have to do overtime.(Bader's father also always spends his sparetime in the "Dewaniya" with his friends from five o'clock to eleven o'clock p.m.)."

The parents who chose "seldom" also mentioned being busy working, life matters, and being illiterate was the reason for choosing seldom, for example,

Nawal's father : " I am always busy working and in the home, so I seldom ask Nawal about her homework."

It is clear from parents' explanations that they show little interest in their children's homework and schoolwork. The reason for this seems to be that there are other demands on their time or because of their own lack of education.

When the students were asked the question, " Do your parents make sure that you finish your homework ?", two students out of ten from the high achieving group chose "usually", three students chose "sometimes", and five students chose "never". One student in the low achieving group chose "seldom", and nine chose "never".

The students in the high achieving group who chose 'usually" commented on their choice, for example,

Mohammed : " My parents are confident about me but they usually ask me about my homework to make sure that I have finished it."

The students from the high achieving group who chose "sometimes" explained their choice in these words:

Salem : " If they find there is a need to do so, they do, but their confidence in me is very high "

The rest of students in the high achieving group who chose "never" said in their explanations that the confidence between them and their parents was high, for example,

Ahmed : " They always depend on the confidence between me and them in everything".

In general it is clear that the trust between the students in the high achieving group and their parents was high.

The students in the low achieving group who chose "never", and Naser who chose "seldom", mentioned that the fact that their parents were busy and their own lack of education did not allow the parents to make sure that their children finished their homework, for example,

Monera : " My father is in the army and when he returns from his work he goes to sleep, and then when he wakes up he goes to the "Dewaniya", and he doesn't get back home until midnight; so where is the time for him to make sure that I have finished my homework? At the same time my mother is always busy in the home and she does not have enough education"

When the parents were asked this question, " Do you make sure that your child finishes her/his homework?", four parents out of ten from the high achieving group chose "usually", three parents chose "sometimes", one parent chose seldom", and five parents chose "never". In contrast, two parents out of ten in the low achieving group chose "sometimes", one parent chose "seldom", and seven parents chose "never".

The parents of Waled and Layla in the high achieving group, who chose "usually", explained their choice in these words:

Waled's father : " There is a confidence between me and Waled but every Friday I usually discuss with him everything he has done during the week to ensure that he is all right."

The parents in the high achieving group who chose "sometimes" gave similar reasons for their choice:

The rest of the parents in the high achieving group who chose "never" and Abdulazeez's father who chose "seldom" mentioned that the high confidence that they had in their children was the reason for not checking up on homework.

The parents in the low achieving group who chose "sometimes" (Khaled, Nurah's parents), explained their choice in these words:

Khaled's mother : " In fact I didn't complete my education, so I can't discuss his homework with him."

Nurah's father : " I am always busy working"

The rest of the parents who chose "never" and Bader's father who chose "seldom" explained their choice in these words:

Naser's father : " I am always busy working or with my new family."

Yahya's father : " I am always away from the home working or in the "Dewaniya" and also I don't have enough education to help me to make sure that he does his homework"

Bader's father, who chose "seldom", explained his choice in these words: " I am seldom at home and also I am illiterate."

From the above two questions to both students and parents, it is clear that asking questions, about schoolwork and homework, was of interest to the parents in the high achieving group; the students' answers in the high achieving group were centered on "always" and "usually" and the parents' answers to the same questions were similarly

centered on "always" and "usually". The interest was also apparent from how the students and their parents' explained their choices.

In contrast, the answers of students in the low achieving group centered on "sometimes" and "seldom" and the answers of the parents in low achieving group was centered on "seldom". It is clear from students' and parents' answers that the questions about schoolwork and homework were not given much priority.

The interest in schoolwork and homework in the high achieving group may have a role to play in the students' high achievement in their school. At the same time the desire of the parents in the high achieving group to help their children and to organise their children's studytime and schedules, encourages the children to become high achievers. The reverse is true in the low achieving group.

Myers (1983 ) pointed out that parents who showed increased concern for the child's educational achievement tended to have more positive results and the sub-groups made little difference.

The researcher noticed from students' and parents' explanations in the high achieving group that the trust between them was high. In contrast, this confidence did not appear in the explanations of students and parents in the low achieving group.

The high confidence between the students and their parents in the high achieving group appeared in the answers to the question about doing the schoolwork and homework and it was shown again when they justified their answers to the question about making sure they did the homework. Five students out of ten and five parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "never" and now they justified the reason for their choice by refering to high level of confidence.

In contrast, the confidence between the students and their parents in the low achieving group was not apparent, and where nine students out of ten, and seven parents out of ten parents chose "never"; when they were asked if they made sure about doing homework, they justified the reason for their choice by refering to being busy

working and being busy with their family, spending time in the Dewaniya and also to their lack of education.

The high confidence and trust between the students and their parents which some parents encouraged in their children from an early age may have a role in the students' high achievement. The opposite may be true in the low achieving group.

The existence of confidence between the students and their parents in the high achieving group may help the students to work hard at school without parental pressure, to reach a high achievement level and to prove to their parents that they are deserving of their parents' confidence.

The researcher noticed from the parents' explanations that being busy at work, time spent with the family, and in the Dewaniya or their lack of education were the main reasons for parents not supervising their children's homework. Turkey (1974 ) noticed that the occurrence of confidence and interest from parents has a role in the success of high achieving students and vice versa in the case of low achieving students.

### **7.3.3 Parents' Spending time on their children's homework**

When the researcher asked the question, " Do your parents spend time on your homework? and if `Yes or sometimes`, how much time do they usually spend?", eight students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "Yes", and two students chose "sometimes" and with regard to the time that the parents spent, four students out of the eight students who chose "Yes" said "more than one hour", four students out of the eight who chose "Yes" said "an hour", while one student out of the two students who chose "sometimes" said " about half an hour".

In the low achieving group eight students out of ten chose "No", one student chose "Yes", and one student chose "sometimes". With regard to the time spent, the one student who said "Yes" chose "ten minutes", while the other student who chose "sometimes " also said "ten minutes".

The four students in the high achieving group who chose "Yes" and "more than an hour" or "an hour" talked about parental involvement as follows.

Ahmed : " My father always spends more than one hour every day with my homework. He discusses it with me and asks about the new subjects that I am doing in school and then he gives me some questions as an exercise for me."

Layla : " My parent spends around an hour every day on my homework helping me and encouraging me to do my best and he usually asks me some questions in order to make it clear for me."

Haya, and Salem in the high achieving group who chose "sometimes" and who chose "half an hour" explained their choice, for example,

Haya : " Most days my father spends half an hour with me to help me with my homework and to solve any problems I have."

It is clear from the students' explanations that their parents usually or sometimes spend much time helping with their children's homework, and they do so every day or most days.

From the eight students in the low achieving group who chose "No", three students did not give any comments about their choice but the other five students did.

Ahlam : " She is very busy working and in the home, also she can't even read or write."

Khaled who chose "Yes" and then chose "ten minutes", and Hala who chose "sometimes" and then chose "ten minutes" gave these explanations:

Khaled : " Sometimes my mother spends ten minutes with me when I do my homework but she doesn't help me when I have a problem because she doesn't have enough education to help me, however she encourages me."

Hala : " My father sometimes spends ten minutes with me but it is not very often and then he only helps with the Quran because that is the only thing he knows about."



It is clear from the students' explanations in the low achieving group that their parents do not often spend time on their children's homework and if so it is only approximately ten minutes at any one time.

When the researcher asked the parents, " Do you spend time with your child's homework? and if "Yes" or "sometimes" how much time do you usually spend ?", nine parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "Yes" and one parent chose "sometimes". With regard to the time that they spend, five parents out of the nine parents who chose "Yes" chose "more than an hour", four parents out of the nine parents who chose "Yes" chose "an hour", and the parent who chose "sometimes" chose "half an hour". In contrast, in the low achieving group eight parents out of ten chose "No", one parent chose "Yes", and one parent chose "sometimes". With regard to the time that they spend with their children's homework, the one parent who chose "Yes" said "ten minutes" and the other parent who chose "sometimes" said "five minutes".

The five parents who chose "Yes" in the high achieving group and who chose "more than an hour" or "an hour" mentioned their interest and how they help their children do the homework everyday. For example,

Ahmed's father: "I always help Ahmed with his homework and also I set aside four hours every day in my schedule, from 3 o'clock to 7 o'clock, to discuss with my children anything they need to discuss."

Layla's father : " Most days I spend time on Layla's homework to give her more exercises to broaden her understanding of the subject and to help her to solve her homework problems."

Salem's father, who chose "sometimes", and who chose "half an hour" explained his choice in these words:

" Every day I spend half an hour with Salem's homework to help him if he needs it."

It is clear from the parents and the students' explanations in the high achieving group that the parents sometimes spend time on their children's homework, and often they spend more than an hour or at least an hour with them, moreover they do this every day or most days.

From the eight parents who chose "No" in the low achieving group, two parents did not give any comment about their choice but the rest of the parents from the eight mentioned that the reason for their choice was due to being occupied with work, time spent in the Dewaniya, or because of their own low level of education, for example, Hala's father who chose "Yes" and "ten minutes", and Khaled's mother who chose "sometimes" and then chose "five minutes" gave these explanations:

Hala's father : " Sometimes I help her if there is something I know. But I can't always because my level of education is low." ( Although Hala's father had chosen "Yes" when he answered the question, when he explained his choice he used the word "sometimes." )

Khaled's mother : " I am always busy but sometimes I spend about five minutes with Khaled when he does his homework to encourage him."

It is clear from the parents' explanations in the low achieving group that the parents do not usually spend time on their children's homework and if they do, they only spend very little time about five to ten minutes. Moreover they don't help every day.

From the above it is clear that the majority of parents of the high achieving group spend time with their children's homework. It is also clear that the time they spend with their children's homework is long, from a half hour to several hours. Furthermore the parents spend that amount of time every day or most days. In contrast it is clear from the students and their parents' explanations in the low achieving group that the parents in this group do not usually spend time with their children's homework and if

so, the time is limited, only about ten minutes as in the case of Hala and Khaleds' parents. Furthermore even this limited help is not often.

The large amount of time that the parents of the high achieving group spend with their children's homework every day plays a role in helping the children attain a high level of achievement. In addition, the substantial amount of time that the parents spend with their children looking at their homework may give the students an opportunity to learn more about their subject, which leads to improvement in their performance and thus high achievement. This point is especially true in relation to the Kuwaiti educational system where the curriculum and the amount of homework extensive and parental effort and cooperation facilitate the success of students in the system.

Bennett (1982) quotes studies suggesting a positive relationship between the total amount of time spent by pupils on curriculum tasks and their academic achievement. In addition to the long periods of time that the parents in the high achieving group spend every day or most days on homework, we found that there are different activities that the parents do during the homework time which showed their involvement with their children. In contrast, we found that the fact that the parents in the low achieving group were busy or the low level of education were the main barriers which prevented the parents from spending time on their children's homework.

It is clear that the difference in occurrence of the parental involvement between the high achieving group and the low achieving group produces effects. Keith et al (1986) found that a measure of parental involvement with their children's lives was positively associated with the amount of time their children spent doing homework.

#### **7.3.4 Parental Help and Encouragement**

The researcher asked the students two questions: (A) "Which relative has helped and encouraged you the most in your education?", (ten choices were possible) and (B)

" How and in what ways has he or she helped and encouraged you?"

For question A, six out of ten students in the high achieving group chose "both parents", two students chose "father", and two students chose "mother". In contrast, only one student in the low achieving group chose "both parents", one student chose 'mother", one student chose "brother", one student chose 'sister", one student chose "friend", three students chose 'other relatives", and two students chose "nobody".

The six students in the high achieving group who chose "both parents" justified their choice in these words:

Abdulazeez : " My father and my mother always help and encourage me verbally and they always reward me when I do something to deserve the reward. Also they help me if I face anything that is difficult for me to understand."

Waled : " My parents always help me when I need help and they also give me the confidence and the freedom to do everything I want, but with their supervision. Also they always reward me when I do well in school."

The two students ( Mohammed and Haya) who chose "father" explained their choice in these words, for example,

Haya : " Both my parents help me with my homework and school work but my father does more because he is always urging me to be top and he always expresses his happiness when I do very well in school."

The other two students who chose "mother" explained their choice in these words:

Ahmed : " Both my father and my mother help me and encourage me, but my mother does more and she always solves my homework problems when my father is busy working."

It is clear that the parental interest in the high achieving group to help and encourage their children was high. In contrast, Adel in the low achieving group who chose "both parents" explained in these words:

Adel: " My parents help me and encourage me, not by helping me with my homework because they are both illiterate but, by increasing my pocket money and by giving me a car to drive".

Bader in the low achieving group who chose "mother" explained his choice : " She is illiterate, for that reason she doesn't help me in my school work but sometimes she encourages me verbally."

Yahya, Nawal, and Ahlam who chose "brother", "sister", and "friend" explained their choice in these words, for example,

Yahya : " Sometimes my big brother encourages me by giving me money but he doesn't help me with my education."

The three students who chose "other relatives" explained their choice. One of them was Khaled, he replied: " Sometimes my uncle tries to encourage me but he also scolds me".

Naser and Bader who chose "nobody" explained their choice in these words, for example, Naser said: " There is no encouragement or help from my parents or anyone else but there is beating and threatening."

It is clear that the parental interest in helping and encouraging the children in the low achieving group was low. In this group we also found that some other people, not the parents, play a role in encouraging the students but do not actually help them with their school work.

From the above we can see that there is interest on the part of parents to help and encourage their children in the high achieving group and that this has a role in helping them achieve; those parents always give their children rewards, show them confidence and give them freedom. In fact all the help and encouragement students in the high achieving group receive from their parents has a role in helping them in their education, the opposite is true in the low achieving group.

The researcher found from the students' explanations in the low achieving group that there is a lack of interest on the part of their parents: only one student (Adel) mentioned the encouragement of his parents at all and that was by increasing his pocket money and by allowing him to drive the car ( not suitable for his age) rather than scholastic support. The reason for his parents giving this kind of encouragement may be because both his parents are illiterate, so they can not help him in his education, as he explained. Other students in the low achieving group explained that there are other people who encourage them in their education like their sister, brother, friend, and other relatives which means that their parents' encouragement compared with those people was weak. However even those people do not help the students in their school work sometimes encourage them by scolding them or by verbally encouraging them. Other students in the low achieving group mentioned that there is no help or even encouragement from their parents or anybody else. Instead beating and threatening were prevalent in the treatment of these students.

In general it is clear that the lack of interest in helping and encouraging students in the low achieving group on the part of their parents may decrease the students' motivation to achieve high standards of education as Morcy argues ( Morcy 1988).

### **7.3.5 Parental Rewards**

When the researcher asked the question " Do your parents give any rewards to you if you do well in school? ", eight students in the high achieving group out of ten chose "always" and two students chose "usually". In contrast, two students out of ten in the low achieving group chose "sometimes", two students chose "seldom", and six students chose "never".

The students in the high achieving group who chose "always" and "usually" mentioned that their parents reward them verbally and by presents, for example, Nore : " My parents always reward me verbally and by giving me a valuable present, the value of the present depends on my grades which means, if my grades have

improved, the present will be more valuable and if my grades are lower the present will be less valuable. In fact, my parents always encourage me and motivate me to do well in the school so that I can help my country in the future. Last year when I got "excellent" at school they allowed me to have a big party with my friends at home."

Abullah : " My parents reward me by telling me how well I've done and by giving me a present. They also promise to give me something I like if I get high grades."

It is clear that the parents in the high achieving group always or usually reward their children and this reward is verbal or by a present and the value of the present depends on their grades.

In contrast, the two students (Naser, Monera) in the low achieving group who chose "sometimes" explained their choice in these words:

Naser : " A few times he has rewarded me but not always [although he chose "sometimes" he used "a few times" in the explanation]"

Monera : " Sometimes he rewards me when he has money."

The two students who chose "seldom" in the low achieving group did not give any comments. The same was true of the first of the three students who chose "never", but the other three students who chose "never" explained their choice in these words:

Bader : " He doesn't care about rewards."

Ahlam : " Her salary is too low to be able to give a reward"

Nurah : " He always wants me to get full marks before giving me a reward, which is difficult for me to get."

It is clear that only sometimes or seldom do the parents of the low achieving group reward their children. And it is clear that low income, low interest in rewarding, and high expectation of parents are barriers which prevent the children from getting rewards.

When the researcher asked the parents this question. " Do you give any reward to your child for doing well in the school?," nine parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "always" and one parent chose "usually". In contrast, one parent in the low achieving group out of ten chose "usually", three parents chose "sometimes", one parent chose "seldom", and five parents chose "never".

The parents in the high achieving group who chose "always" explained their choice in these words. Fatema's father was one of these parents, he replied : " I always reward Fatema by telling her she's done well and by giving her a valuable present and I always motivate her to do well in her school. I know that the reward has a role in encouraging students to reach the top."

It is clear that the parents in the high achieving group "always" or "usually" use a system of rewards. It is also clear that the role of reward to encourage students to get high achievement was very clear in their minds.

With regard to the low achieving group, Monera's father who chose "usually" explained his choice in these words:

" I usually reward Monera when she improves her marks at school."

The three parents who chose "sometimes" explained their choice in these words. An example of them was Khaled's mother, he said : " Sometimes when I get money I buy a present for Khaled."

The parents who chose "seldom" did not give any comments. The first of the two parents who chose "never", gave no comment however the other three parents who chose "never" explained their choice in these words:

Ahlam's mother : " My salary is low because I work in the school as a cleaner so I can't afford rewards."

Adel's father : " I don't care about rewards"

Nurah's father : " She didn't get what I wanted her to get, so I didn't reward her. "



It is clear from the parents of the low achieving group explanations that sometimes or seldom do they reward their children. It is also clear that low income, low interest in reward and high expectations of parents from their children were barriers which prevented the students from getting rewards from their parents.

From the above it is clear that parents in the high achieving group always or usually reward their children and this reward is not just by telling them verbally or by telling them how important their success is, but also by giving them presents. Furthermore, the role of rewards in motivating children to get high levels of achievement was very clear in the parents' minds, thus they always use them in order to obtain a positive result. It is also clear from the explanations of the parents of the high achieving group that their high incomes help them to reward their children with valuable presents.

In contrast, it is clear that parents of the low achieving group only sometimes or seldom give rewards to their children, as shown before in what was said.

It is also clear from the parents' and childrens' explanations who chose "never" in the low achieving group that the low salary of parents, low interest in rewards, and the expectations of parents which are not appropriate to their children's abilities were barriers which prevented them from giving rewards to their children.

It is clear that the above barriers which prevent parents in the low achieving group from giving their children rewards may be due to the low occupation, low income, high number of children and low education of the parents ( see Table 7.1) which thus reduces the motivation for children to attain high achievement levels. In contrast we found that the low number of children, the high occupation, high income, and high level of education of parents ( see Table 7.1) may lead the parents to reward their children with valuable presents and also to allow parents to control their expectations to be nearer to their children's ability. Both these factors help to motivate the students to achieve.

Abdulraheem (1991) indicated that if parents encourage their children to attain high levels of achievement verbally, or by giving them a present or by taking them on a trip as a reward, this may be considered a factor which pushes the students to continue studying and then obtain a high achievement level in the school. Furthermore, Scott-Jones (1982) mentioned that the best situation may be for parental expectations not to be simply high in an absolute sense but to be near to the child's real performance ability.

### **7.3.6 Parental Control over their Children's Time:**

When the students were asked " How important is it for your parents that you complete your homework before you play (social activities) or watch the TV ?" seven students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "very important" and the other three students chose "fairly important". In contrast, only three students out of ten in the low achieving group chose "fairly important", five students chose "not important" and two students chose "she or he doesn't care".

When the parents were asked the same question, eight parents out of ten of the high achieving group chose "very important" and two parents chose "fairly important". In contrast two parents out of ten in the low achieving group chose "fairly important", four parents chose "not important", and four parents chose "I don't care".

The students in the high achieving group who chose "very important" or "fairly important" mentioned their parents organizing their time, for example:

Layla : " My parents always require that I do my homework before playing or watching TV. They help me by organizing my time; together we set aside a time for doing homework, time for playing and time for watching TV, provided that homework is the first thing that I do, in order not to forget what I did at school."

The parents in the high achieving group who chose "very important" and "fairly important" explained their choice in these words:

Walid's father : " I always help my children to organize their time for homework and playing provided that they do their homework first; so that they do not forget what they covered in school."

It is clear that the diligence of the parents of the high achieving group in organizing their children's time and putting the doing of homework first is important for them.

The students in the low achieving group who chose "fairly important" explained their choice in these words. For example,

Nawal : " My father sometimes asks about my homework."

The students who chose "not important" and "he or she doesn't care" explained their choice as follows:

Adel : " My parents are always busy, my father with his work and my mother with housework and with my brothers and sisters."

Monera : " My parents don't care about organizing my homework time."

The parents of the low achieving group who chose "fairly important" justified their choice. An example of them was Naser's father, he said : " I think doing homework before playing is best, but in fact I don't ask my children if they have finished their homework or not."

The parents who chose "not important" and " don't care" quoted their occupation outside the home and their own low educational level as reasons for lack of attention.

For example,

Hala's father : " I don't care about this because I am always busy and also I am illiterate."

It is clear that low interest in organizing the students' homework time exists in the low achieving group.

Furthermore, when the researcher asked the students the question " At what time do you normally go to bed on a week night?", one out of ten students of the high

achieving group chose "before nine", six students chose "about nine", two students chose "about ten" and one student chose "about eleven". In contrast, one out of ten students of the low achieving group chose "about nine", three students chose "about ten", four students chose "about eleven", one student chose "about twelve" and one student chose "after twelve".

The students who chose "before nine" and also the students who chose "about nine" indicated the role that their parents play in organizing their time in order to be active next day, for example:

Nore : " I always go to bed at nine o'clock according to my parents' organization of my time. This is to help me be more active the next day and thus I can pay more attention in school."

The two students Mohammed and Abdollah who chose "ten" and Ahmed who chose "about eleven" explained, for example,

Mohammed : " The role that my parents play in organizing my time is considerable. I spend most of my time doing my homework and at ten o'clock p.m. I go to bed."

It is clear that parents' organization of their children's time is very important in this group.

In the low achieving group, Bader, who chose "about nine", mentioned that he goes to bed at that time because he needs a rest. But the rest of the students who chose different times gave different explanations.

Yahya : " In fact, every day I go out with my friends after lunchtime and stay out until twelve p.m. and sometimes in the holidays later than that. My parents are not happy about that but they don't care about me."

Monera: " I always go to bed at eleven o'clock because I spend most of the time cleaning and washing dishes after dinner and my mother doesn't care if I do these jobs early or later on."

Hala : " I always go to bed at twelve o'clock because I spend most of the time watching films on TV which end late at night and my parents don't care about that."

From the above it is clear that there may be no parental organization of their children's bedtime in the low achieving group and also the parents in this group may not be interested in their children.

When the students were asked the question " How do you normally spend your time after school?" ten out of ten students of the high achieving group chose "other". In contrast, seven students out of ten of the low achieving group chose "play activities outside the house", two students chose "watching TV, and two students chose "other".

The students in the high achieving group explained their choice in these words:

Ahmed : " My father helped me to make a timetable to organize my time in which from 2 o'clock to 3 o'clock I take a rest and from 3 o'clock to 7 o'clock I do my homework. Then from 7 o'clock to 8 o'clock I watch T.V and from 8 o'clock to 9 o'clock I read different books and magazines."

Fatema : " My parents divided my time to make time for doing homework, time for watching scientific programmes and other time for reading different books, newspapers and magazines."

From the above we can say that there is parental organization of their children's time in which there is a time for doing homework and another time for playing and watching TV and another time for reading useful scientific books, newspapers and magazines.

In the low achieving group the two students Ahmed and Monera who chose "other" said:

Ahmed : " In fact I spend very little time doing homework and I spend most of the time watching TV."

Monera : " I spend most of the time helping my mother cleaning and washing."

The students who chose, "play outside the home", explained their choice in these words, for example,

Naser : " Everyday after lunch time I go to the store with my friends, we talk with each other or we smoke cigarettes."

The student who chose "watching TV" also explained his choice in these words:

Hala : " After school I spend most of the time watching TV until midnight."

From the above we can say that in the low achieving group there may be no parental organization of their children's time after school. Also from the students' explanations we find that there may be no special time for doing homework or reading useful books, compared to what happens in the high achieving group, which means that the role of the parents in organizing their children's time is not clear.

From all the above we can say that the role of parents of the high achieving group in organizing their children's homework time was obvious. The students showed this to be true in their answers when they chose "very important" and "fairly important". The opposite was true in the low achieving group whose answers were either "not important" or "I don't care". The students in the low achieving group gave some reasons for the low level of parental interest in organizing their time. It is clear that the interest in organizing homework time plays a major role in increasing knowledge, organizing ideas and in obtaining information which leads to students performing well in school.

When the researcher asked the students of the high achieving group the question regarding bedtime he realized that those students go to bed early compared with the bedtime of students of the low achieving group. From the students' explanations it is clear that the role of parents of the high achieving group in organizing their children bedtime was important. The opposite is true in the low achieving group.

The interest of the parents in organizing their children's bedtime has a role in making sure that children get enough rest so as to be active next day and receive a day full of new experiences. This is conducive to good understanding and then high achievement.

When the researcher asked the students in the high achieving group the question regarding spending time outside the home he noticed that they organize their time so that there is a time for doing homework, then time for playing and watching TV and also time for reading useful books, newspapers and magazines. The role of the parents of the high achieving group in organising their children's time is clear. The opposite is true of the low achieving group. The parents in this group do not organize their children's time and often show little interest in them. This in turn led to some of the children watching TV without supervision, others being occupied with housework, and others staying outside the home. All of which affects their achievement in a negative way.

The parents who organize the division of their children's time between doing homework, amusements and reading books ensure that their children feel both relaxed and satisfied, because they are meeting their physical, scientific and social needs in a balanced way, and this leads to good motivation and helps students to reach a high level of achievement.

Slaiman (1988) in her study on a sample of 270 normal and superior students found that there is a positive correlation between doing homework and organizing time and student's achievement level. The results showed that 45% of normal female students and 23% of normal male students suffer from feelings of lack of time, lack of comfort and lack of organizing their time. They also do not know the best way to do their homework.

### **7.3.7 Parents' Supervision in Choosing Friends**

When the researcher asked the students, " Are most of your friends (1) successful students or (2) repeating students?", ten students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "successful students". In contrast, ten students out of ten in the low achieving group chose "repeating students" .

The students in the high achieving group who chose "successful students" explained:

Mohammed : " I like my friends to be the same standard as me"

Abdulazeez : " My father advises me to choose successful friends so that I benefit from their experiences and they benefit from my experiences."

The students in the low achieving group who chose "repeating students" gave some reasons for their choices.

Naser : " If I go around with a successful student, all the other students will make fun of me."

Monera : "They are the same as my own standard. "

Nurah : " The successful students don't bother speaking to me."

It is clear that in the high achieving group, parents' advice to their children has a role in the choice of successful friends, whereas in the low achieving group this role of parents was not clearly shown according to their children's explanations.

Furthermore when the researcher asked, " Do your parents intervene in choosing your friends?", one student out of ten in the high achieving group chose "always", three students chose "usually", five students chose "sometimes", and one student chose "seldom". In contrast, one student out of ten in the low achieving group chose "sometimes", two students chose "seldom" and seven students chose "never".

When the researcher asked the parents, " Do you know your child's friends?" ten parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "yes". In contrast, only two



parents out of ten in the low achieving group chose "yes", and seven parents chose "No".

In the high achieving group the students who chose "always" and "usually" explained their choice in these words, for example,

Ahmed : " My parents usually give me the freedom to choose my friends but they supervise my choice. They also know who my friends are to make sure that my choice is all right. "

Also the students who chose "sometimes" and "seldom" said:

Mohammed : " My parents give me the freedom to choose my friends because they trust me, but sometimes they intervene if they discover something about my friends which I did not know."

Nore: " My parents give me the freedom to choose my friends, and they trust me, and because of that it is rare that they intervene in my choice."

In the high achieving group the parents who chose "yes" for the question as to whether they know their child's friends, explained their choice in these words, for example,

Ahmed's father : " I always try to find out about Ahmed's friends, their families, and all about them. Also I supervise him with his friends. In my opinion friendship may lead to success or to failure according to the quality of the friend."

It is clear from the students and the parents in the high achieving group that the students in this group were given the freedom to choose their friends but with the supervision of their parents. The evidence for this is that all the parents in this group when they were asked if they knew their children's friends, answered "yes".

In the low achieving group, Khaled who chose "sometimes" said: " Sometimes she asks about my friends"

The two students who chose "seldom" and also the two students who chose "never" did not give any comments about their choice, but the rest of the students who chose "never" commented, for example,

Ahlam : " She doesn't ask me about my friends or even intervene because she doesn't care about that "

Also in the low achieving group the parents who chose "No" to the question as to whether they knew their children's friends, explained their choice in these words:

Naser's father : " Because I am busy with my daily work and with my family, I have no time for that."

Monera's father : " In fact I don't care about this."

It is clear that parents' time spent on daily work and with their families in the low achieving group were barriers which prevented them from supervising their children's choice of friends. This may lead the children to choose their friends without supervision. Also, in this group in both the parents and the children's explanations, the word trust does not appear like it does in the high achieving group.

From the above we found that students in the high achieving group focused on choosing successful friends. They gave explanations for this such as they want to benefit from their friends' experience. The researcher noticed that in the high achieving group parents' advice to their children had a role to play in the selection of successful friends. In contrast, in the low achieving group the answers of the students focused on "repeating students" as friends. They justified their choice because they thought that as Naser said : "the successful students may make fun of them ". In this group the role of the parents in choosing their children's friends was not clear. From the parents' and their children's explanations in the high achieving group it is clear that trust between the parents and their children does exist. The freedom that the parents gave to their children is based on this trust. In this group supervision in choosing friends usually or sometimes exists. McClelland (1984) indicated in his study of the motivation of children to perform academically that the mothers of successful students who are interested in performance, always encourage them to do

new things, to make their decisions on their own, to choose their friends and to be independent in terms of organising children's time.

In contrast, in the low achieving group, we found that the parents' interest in encouraging their children to choose their friends on their own was not clear. Also the parents' supervision of their children's choice is not obvious as Adel said : " They don't intervene in that ". The parents in this group justified the reasons for not knowing who their children's friends were by saying that they were not interested in this, or that because of their work they had no time.

It is clear that in the high achieving group, parental advice and freedom given to their children to choose their friends, along with parents' supervision of their children's choice, has a major role to play in helping the children get connected with successful friends to benefit from their experience, and that this leads to more understanding of their studies at school and thus to high achievement. The opposite was true in the low achieving group. Damon and Phelps (1989) found that the interaction between instructor and pupil is more balanced and more lively when the tutor is a peer. Turkey (1974) indicated that motivation for success and superiority grow in children who grow up in families which are distinguished by trust, encouragement, and independence.

### **7.3.8 Parents And their Children's Hobbies**

When the students were asked the question, " Do you pursue any hobby outside school?", ten students out of ten chose "yes". In contrast, six students out of ten in the low achieving group chose "yes", and four students chose "No".

In the high achieving group the sons' hobbies centered on "sport" and "mechanics", and the girls' hobbies centered on "reading", "painting" and "sport".

In the low achieving group six male students chose "sport" and "fixing electronic equipment" and one female student chose "reading."

Ahmed : " I play football."

Naser : " My hobby is fixing electronic equipment."

Nurah : " My hobby is reading and painting."

But the four students who chose "No", all of whom were girls, explained their choice in these words:

Nawal : " My family is big, and my mother always asks me to help her with housework so there is no time for a hobby."

Ahlam : " The hobby I would like to do is painting but I think this needs money and my mother can not afford it."

Hala : " Most of the time I spend watching TV, so I have no time for a hobby."

It is clear that all the students in the high achieving group tend to pursue hobbies.

Also they indicated the role of their parents in encouraging their hobbies. In contrast, in the low achieving group only a few of students tend to pursue hobbies. The girls didn't have a hobby. The girls stated that the reasons for that were due to the fact that they were busy with housework or watching TV or due to the low income of their families.

Furthermore when the students were asked the question " Do your parents agree with your hobby?", ten students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "agree". In contrast, only three students out of ten in the low achieving group chose "agree", one student chose "disagree", and six students chose, "they don't care".

The students who chose "agree" in the high achieving group explained their choice in these words:

Mohammed: " My parents not only agree with my hobby but also they help me excel in it. They encourage me by letting me belong to a club to become better at my hobby".

Ahmed : " My parents organise my time so that there is a time for studying and a time for pursuing my hobby and for relaxing. They also encourage me to do my hobby and sometimes they share in it with me."

In the low achieving group Adel who chose "agree" said: " They know that I pursue my hobby and they don't mind that I do so ".

Khaled who chose "disagree" commented: " My mother does not agree with my hobby even though I like football".

The rest of the students who chose "they don't care" said:

Ahlam : " My mother doesn't try to provide me with the things I need for my hobby, like painting equipment, also she doesn't encourage my hobby".

Monera : " My parents don't care about my hobby or about trying to amuse myself because they are busy, my mother in the house and my father at work".

From the above it is clear that the students in the high achieving group tend to pursue their hobbies (which varied between sport, mechanics, and communications and wireless for the boys, and reading and painting for the girls). In the high achieving group the researcher noticed from the students' explanations that their parents have a major role in encouraging them to pursue their hobbies. Also the students in this group mentioned that their parents always agreed with their hobbies and encouraged them to amuse themselves. The parents' agreement and sharing in their children's hobbies increased the contact between them and their children. This in turn benefitted their children and affected their culture and achievement in a positive way.

In contrast in the low achieving group, while some of the parents showed agreement with their children's hobbies, they did not show any encouragement or participation in them as was seen in the high achieving group. It was noticed that in this group the parents were not interested in their children's hobbies as their children stated they either don't care about hobbies or they have low incomes which prevents them from

providing their children with what they need for their hobbies, or else they had no time due to housework or outside work.

Pursuing hobbies may satisfy the students' different needs to feel fulfilled which is more important than just the need for amusement. This satisfaction may give the students a motive to perform better especially when he/she has the encouragement and interest of her/his parents. This may be what is happening to for the students in the high achieving group. And the opposite may be true in the low achieving group. Morrow & Wilson (1961) did research on the connection between the parental relationships of students and their educational achievement. They chose a sample of two equal groups, each one containing 48 students in secondary school. The students were in the same year in school and had the same social and economic circumstances, but they in their grade averages were different. From the results of this research it was observed that students of high achievement said that their parents encouraged them to amuse themselves, and they trusted them, which was not the case in the description of the students of low achievement.

#### **7.4 The Home Atmosphere and Environment :**

##### **7.4 1 Home Environment**

When the researcher asked the students and their parents, " Does the family have the following: library - books ( study books, textbooks) - magazines - newspapers - computer - video cassette recorder? he found that eight families out of ten from the high achieving group had a library in their home, ten families out of ten had books ( study books, textbooks), nine families out of ten had magazines, ten families out of ten had newspapers, seven families out of ten had a computer, and nine families out of ten had a video cassette recorder. In contrast, only one family out of ten in the low achieving group had a library in their home, three families out of ten had books ( study books, textbooks), three families out of ten had magazines, two families out of ten had a computer, seven families out of ten had a video cassette recorder.

The students and parents of the high achieving group explained their choice in these words:

Mohammed : " There is a big library in my home and also I have my own library in my room. My parents always encourage me and my brothers and my sisters to use the main library which they think is useful for us. In this library there are many books and textbooks, and also there are monthly and weekly magazines like "Al nahda" and "Al Arabi" [ cultural magazines ]. Regarding newspapers, my father brings the six main newspapers home every day. Also there is a computer in my home which contains educational and amusing programs. We have also different kinds of programmes for the video cassette like "Eftah Ya Semsem" [an educational programme which is similar to Sesame Street], sports and films.

Layla's father : " I created a library, which contains many different books, in my home because I think this has an important role to play in increasing my children's level of culture. Also I bring home different cultural magazines like "Al Arab" and I also bring home magazines for the children like "Al Arabi" "Al Sager" and "Saed" "Majed" as well as the daily newspapers. Also there is a computer which contains many cultural programs and games and I get cultural and scientific programmes for my children on a video tapes so that they can benefit from them."

It is clear that the parents in the high achieving group are interested in acquiring many books, magazines, newspapers and the cultural programmes for their children. Also they encourage them to read such things which plays a major role in increasing their children's level of information.

By contrast, the students and parents in the low achieving group explained their choice in these words:

Khaled : " There is no library, study books, textbooks, or magazines in my home, but there are newspapers and a computer which I use but only for playing games on. We

have also a video cassette recorder, which we use mostly for sport, especially football and police films."

Nurah : " There is a library in our home and it contains study books and text books but it is in my father's office, and in fact he doesn't allow us to read them in his office so that we don't disturb his important papers. There are also magazines "Sayedati" [special magazine for women] and also the daily newspapers but I don't read them. There is no computer, but we have a video which is mostly used for cartoons.

Hala's father : " Sometimes I bring newspapers home and in fact I give them to my children to read anything important to me because I don't read or write. We don't have a library, study books, magazines, a computer, or a video in our home because I think external books, magazines, a computer and a video may waste my children's time and prevent them from studying."

It is clear that the little interest shown by the parents of the low achieving group show in providing different books, magazines, useful programmes and in encouraging their children to benefit from other resources, plays a role in weakening their children's level of culture and in lessening their achievement in school.

From the above we have found that cultural sources like libraries, study books, magazines, newspapers, computers and video are more concentrated in both quality and in quantity in the high achieving group. The cultural sources were various and serve to motivate the children to learn and to increase their culture level and thus to improve their educational achievement. At the same time the parents in this group have a role to play in encouraging their children to benefit from these sources.

Early in 1950 Metcalfe demonstrated that, " The provision of good books in the home proved a significant factor for academic progress." Soto (1990, p.4) wrote that " The family can serve as educators for their children by providing activities and facilitating learning at home. The home learning environment or process variables



present in the home can help to enhance children's school achievement". In contrast, the cultural stimulation in the low achieving group was little and was due to the lack of education and the economic level of the families. In addition, this cultural stimulation is not active and thus does not motivate the children in this group to learn, which does not increase the cultural level of those children and has an indirect effect on their educational achievement in school. Also although there may be a video in the homes of these families, most of the cassettes they have, are of sports, cartoons and police films which do not help to increase the culture of the children and thus to improve the educational achievement in school. Furthermore, although some families in this group may have a computer, they use it only for games. Also some families may have some magazines and newspapers but they are always special for the mother or the father which means that there are no cultural magazines for children.

From the explanations of students and their parents in the low achieving group it can be seen that the role of the parents in encouraging their children to read and benefit from cultural sources was weak due to the family situation. For example, although there is a library which contains different kinds of books in Nurah's father's office, he does not allow anyone to enter his office to take any books to read because he wants his important papers to be safe. Also in the opinion of some parents in this group, the role of the cultural sources to increase reading and knowledge was not clear.

Banks (1973) found that there was a relationship between the home environment and students' educational achievement in school. Soto (1986) also noted the substantial contribution of the home environment to school achievement.

#### **7.4.2 Homework and Bedrooms :**

When the students were asked " Do you have a fixed place to do your homework?", ten out of ten students in the high achieving group chose "yes". In contrast seven students in the low achieving group chose "yes" and three students chose "No".

Also, when the parents were asked " Does your child have a fixed place to do her/his homework?", ten parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "yes". In contrast, six parents in the low achieving group chose "yes" and four parents chose "No".

The students in the high achieving group who chose "yes" explained their choice in these words. For example,

Ahmed : " I do my homework in my own room which contains a table and a chair. It also contains a small library which is full of different books. In my room I always find quietness which helps me to do my homework more easily."

Fatema : " I always do my homework in my special room which is quiet, and where there is classical music and a lot of valuable books that I use when I need to."

The parents in the high achieving group who chose "yes" also explained their choice in these words, as Walid's father said : " There is a special room for Walid to do his homework in. It is separated from the house and it contains different kinds of books ( scientific, literary, cultural, religious), and magazines. It also contains a table and a chair and it is quiet".

From the explanations of the students and their parents in the high achieving group, it is clear that there is a place for doing homework whether it is the student's room or a special place for studying. Also most of the necessary things that help them to do their homework are available like quietness, enough light, a library, different books, a table and a chair.

One pupil ( Khaled) from the low achieving group who chose "yes" mentioned that he has a special room with a table and a chair, but the rest of pupils in this group who chose "yes" explained their choice in these words:

Yahya : " I do my homework in the sitting room and it is the same room that I sleep in with my grandmother because we are a big family."

Ahlam : " I do my homework in a room which I share with my sister. However, there are none of the things that would help me to do my homework. It is not even quiet because my little sister always brings her toys into the room and this disturbs me."

The students in the low achieving group who chose "No" explained their choice in these words. An example was Monera : " Because the room is not just for me but for all my sisters, also my sisters always bother me and my mother always asks me to help her with the house work without paying any interest in my homework."

The parents in the low achieving group who chose "yes" explained their choice in these words. One of them was Nawal's father, he said : " She does her homework in her room which she shares with her sister, but there is no quietness for doing homework because the family is big, but what can we do?"

The four parents in the low achieving group who chose "No" explained their choice in these words, For example,

Monera's father : " In fact there is no suitable place for studying because the house is small and the family is big."

It is clear from the students' and parents' explanations of the low achieving group that there is often no suitable place for the students to do their homework in and if there is this place may be the sitting room and there is often not the necessary quiet for doing homework.

Also when the researcher asked the students " Do you share a bedroom with other people?", five students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "sleep alone", and five students chose "sleep with one brother or sister". In contrast, only one student in the low achieving group chose "sleep alone", three students chose "sleep with one brother or sister, two students chose "sleep with two brothers or sisters", three students chose "sleep with three brothers or sisters", and one student chose "sleep with more than three brothers or sisters and other people at the same time."

When the researcher asked the parents of the two groups' students they gave the same answers as their children.

From the above we can say that in the high achieving group the existence of a good place for doing homework, provided with enough light, quietness and different references, has a role in making homework easier, which then increases the students' achievement in school. The opposite is true in the low achieving group. Also, when we compare the sleeping place between the two groups, we found that most of the students in the high achieving group have their own room or they share it with one or two brothers or sisters, whereas the rooms of the students in the low achieving group included a large number of sisters or brothers. This may have a negative effect because if the room includes more than one person this may lead to a kind of disturbance which is not conducive to doing homework and thus results in low achievement.

Wachs (1979) found in his study that the ratio of rooms to people in the home was more predictive of performance than was the number of people. He suggested that the child having "a personal place" to allow for stimulation was important for development.

According to (Table 7.1) which shows the social-economic conditions of the two groups, we can say that the reasons for the non-existence in the low achieving group of good study places, providing the necessities for doing homework may be due to the low social economic condition of this group i.e. the low cultural awareness, the low educational level of the parents, the low income and the big family size which due to polygamy. All of these hamper the students' home study which may affect their educational achievement in school.

#### **7.4.3 Sibling Achievement :**

When the students were asked, " Do any of your brothers or sisters have low academic achievement or have they failed?", nine students out of ten in the high achieving

group chose "No" and one student chose "yes". In contrast, ten students out of ten in the low achieving group chose "yes". Eight from the nine students in the high achieving group who chose "No" mentioned that all of their siblings were high achievers, also Salem who chose "yes" mentioned that one of his brothers has low achievement only in mathematics. Five students from the ten students in the low achieving group who chose "yes" explained their choice by saying that all of their brothers and sisters were low achievers or had failed; three students mentioned that most of their siblings were low achievers or had failed, and two students mentioned that one to three of their brothers or sisters were low achievers or had failed.

From the above we can say that the atmosphere of the families of the low achieving group is distinguished by low achievement and failure of all their children. From the children's explanations in the low achieving group it can be observed that a large number of the siblings of the families are low achievers and had failed which may have negative effects on the students' own achievements, whereas the success of the high achieving siblings may build competition or an exchange and sharing of experience between them, which leads them to increase their study and then leads to high achievement. Hughes, (1989, p.62 ) stated that, " Brothers and sisters have a profound effect on the education of each other. In many families, older children have substantial roles in the raising and training of their younger siblings". It was clear that the children in the high achieving group obtained good support from their high achieving siblings and from their high achieving friends. Thus, those siblings and friends play a major role in influencing the children's achievement.

According to (Table 7.1), when we compare the number of children in the high and the low achieving groups we find that a large number of children in a family are centered more in the low achieving group, which may show that a large number of children hampers the parents of these families in terms of their control and supervision of their children's studying and this then leads to low achievement.

Clifford (1983 ) found that students from large families were less successful than those from small families. Also in Iraq, Dawoud (1984 ) found an important relationship between family size and achievement at school. According to Dawoud, small families tended to have a better academic status because a small number of children means that they have more time with the parents in the home. But the question here is, what are the factors that determine the number of children? In Kuwait Al Thaqep (1976 ) stated in his study that different education, culture, social economic sides, and age are considered factors which have an effect in determining the number of children in the family. If we look at Table 7.1 and compare the previous points of the two groups we will reach a conclusion which supports Al Thaqep (1976).

#### **7.4.4 The Relationship Between The Father and The Mother :**

When the researcher asked the parents " Do you share with your wife/ husband the solving of your child's school problems?" nine parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "yes" and one parent chose "sometimes". In contrast, eight parents of the low achieving group chose "No", one parent chose "yes", and one parent chose "sometimes". The parents who chose "yes" in the high achieving group gave some reasons for their choice.

Walid's father: " I always try to share in solving my children's problems, whether they are concerned their school or anything else, with my wife."

Mohammed's father : " We both try to solve our children's problems by putting forward a collective solution in order to reach a suitable one."

Haya's father who chose "sometimes" explained his choice in these words:

Haya 's father : " I do not try to share with my wife the solving of our children's school problems because of her low educational level."

From the explanations of the parents in the high achieving group it is clear that there is usually a sharing between the mother and the father in solving their children's school problems.

The six parents out of the eight parents in the low achieving group who chose "No" explained their choice in these words:

Yahya's father : " No, because I am the man in the house".

Hala's father : " No, I am the one who takes the decisions."

The two other parents from these eight parents explained their choice in these words, for example,

Monera's father : " No, because she is uneducated."

Bader's father in the low achieving group who chose "sometimes" explained that he occasionally talks with his wife about their children's problems in school.

Also Naser's father who chose "yes" mentioned that he sometimes discussed with his wife their children's problems in school.

It is clear here that there is a kind of domination by the fathers and that they do not share decision making with their wives.

It is clear from the above that the family climate of the high achieving group and the relationship between the mother and the father of those families offers a kind of cooperation, understanding and respect between them. The reasons for the existence of a kind of cooperation in this group may be due to the high educational, social, economic level of the fathers and mothers which motivate them to share with each other decision-making, conversation and family support. In contrast, it is clear from the explanations of the parents in the low achieving group that the relationship between the mother and the father is built on the domination of the father according to the old eastern traditions.

This may be due to the general weakness of the educational and cultural level of the fathers and the mothers of this group. This allows the father be dominant in

everything in the house because he is the family supporter and every member in the family must obey him without discussion or objection. The key question here is, what is the importance of a good family climate and harmony between the father and the mother in the family ?

Al Talib (1982) indicated that the healthy harmonious relationship between the man and the women was considered a strong basis for in building a successful family in society. Also, he stated that the emotional climate at home results from the parents' interaction and is an important factor which affects every member in the family. As the relationship between the parents expresses the style of the dominant authority in the house, this authority has an important effect on the children's characters and thus on their performance in school. Because understanding, cooperation and exchange of opinions between the mother and the father form an authoritative atmosphere inside the home, this atmosphere may be manipulated to produce encouragement, to providing useful experiences and to provide extra contact between the parents and their children, all which are considered to be influencing factors in creating a good environment for the children, which is helpful to them in achieving well.

This agrees with Holmes's (1988 p 241) conclusion, when he says that, " The variable emotional climate of the home is a more subjective variable. It has been included here because it seemed to me that there were aspects of home life associated with emotional disturbance at home which could potentially influence a child's performance."

## **7.5 The Relationship and Communication between Family and School :**

### **7.5.1 The Parents' Visit to the School :**

When the parents were asked " Did you or your wife /husband visit your child's school and talk to her/ his teacher last year?", ten parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "yes". In contrast, eight parents in the low achieving group chose "No" and two parents chose 'yes'.



The parents who chose "yes" in the high achieving group said that they always try to find out everything about their children, including their educational achievement.

Also, they always visit the school even if they are not sent for. For example:

Walid's father : " I always visit the school whether the school sends for me or not .

Also I always watch Walid's marks and if I see that his marks are going down, I visit the school to learn the reasons even if it is only a difference of one mark."

Abdullah's father : " There is communication between me and the school, while I wait for them to call me for a parents' meeting. I visit them one or two times a month to satisfy myself that I know my son's behaviour and performance in the school."

From the parents' explanations of the high achieving group it is clear that there is a desire to visit the school and to monitor the children's performance.

The eight parents who chose "No" in the low achieving group explained their choice in these words:

Adel's father : " Frankly, I am always busy with other matters so I have no time for that."

Yahya's father : " Frankly two years ago I visited the school and I noticed that my son was not improving so I told them that if he did not improve I would not go to visit the school again, so I broke off contact with them."

Hala's father : " Because there is no suitable time for that and I feel ashamed to ask about my daughter because she is lazy."

The two parents of Khaled and Bader who chose "yes" explained their choice in these words, for example, Bader's father : " Last year the school sent for me to visit because Bader had a serious problem that needed the police as well."

From the explanations of the parents in the low achieving group it is clear that there is no interest or there is no suitable time for them to visit school, as Hala's father said about not visiting the school, nor asking about their children's progress.

From the above we can say that the parents' interest in the high achieving group in visiting the school to ask about their children's performance and behaviour, as they said, gave them a clear picture of their children. This made them be aware of their children's progress which helped them to supervise their children in the house. This interest was reflected in the child's achievement and encouraged her/him to be high achievers. In contrast, the parents' visits in the low achieving group were few and when they occurred were at the insistence of the school. It was clear from these parents' explanations that there were some reasons for not visiting their children's school: being busy with other matters, no confidence in the general role of visiting school, embarrassment with their children's achievement because their children were lazy. The small number of visits to school of parents in this group has a negative influence in that these parents do not know about their children's problems and do not discuss this with the school. This results in the parents being careless and causes their children be low achievers. With regard to parental support, Craft (1974) argued that, There is no doubt that parents who visit the school often and wish their children to enjoy a selective and protracted education in general give a boost to their children's educational progress.

#### **7.5.2 The Relationship between Students, Teachers and Social Specialists:**

When the students were asked " Do you feel comfortable talking to the teacher ?", ten students out of ten in the high achieving group chose the answer "yes". In contrast, only one student out of ten in the low achieving group chose "sometimes", nine students chose "No".

The students in the high achieving group who chose "yes" mentioned the good relationship between them and their teacher as can be seen below:

Ahmed : " I always try to talk to my teacher if I feel there is something difficult or not clear to me. Also there is a friendship between me and my teacher."

Haya : " I always ask my teacher about anything which is not clear to me or if my marks are low. Also, I try to correct my teacher if she is wrong without feeling embarrassed because my father taught me to speak up if I see any thing wrong and to ask about the things that I do not understand."

Adel who chose "sometimes" in the low achieving group explained his choice in these words:

Adel : " Sometimes I feel it is easy to talk to them, but in fact I do not do so."

The rest of students in the low achieving group who chose "No" said:

Naser : " I am always afraid to speak up or to ask my teacher about anything with my teachers because they are impatient and they may shout at me in front of the other students."

Monerah : " Sometimes I feel I am lazy so I feel embarrassed to talk to my teachers."

Also the researcher asked the students, " Do you feel comfortable talking to the social specialist?", and ten students out of ten in the high achieving group chose "yes". In contrast, only two students in the low achieving group chose "sometimes" and eight students chose "No".

The ten students who chose "yes" explained their choice in these words:

Fatema : " If I have any problem in the class or with the teacher I always discuss it with the social specialist."

Naser and Adel who chose "sometimes" mentioned that sometimes they feel comfortable about speaking to the social specialist, but in fact they had never spoken to him and he had not sent for them at all.

The rest of students in the low achieving group who chose "No" indicated their shame of speaking to the social specialist. One of them was Monera, she said: " I feel shy and she does not ask me about my situation and because of that I don't like to go to her."

It is clear that the role of the parents in the high achieving group in encouraging their children to be self-confident is helpful; they prompt them to ask the teacher and the social specialist about anything they do not understand. This creates a healthy climate for dealing with each other and encourages a friendship between them. In contrast, all of this is missed in the low achieving group as the relationship between the students and the teachers and social specialist is built on fear and shame. This weakens the relationship between them and then leads to low achievement. There is also the question, what are the feelings of the parents when they deal with the teachers and the social specialist?

#### **7.5.3 The Relationship between Parents, Teachers and Social specialist:**

The researcher asked the parents the same question that he asked students in the above, first in relation to the teachers. Nine parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "yes" and one parent chose "No". In contrast, six parents out of ten in the low achieving group chose "No", three parents chose "sometimes", and only one parent chose "yes". The second part dealt with the social specialist. Nine parents out of ten in the high achieving group chose "yes", and one parent chose "sometimes". In contrast, five parents in the low achieving group chose "No", four parents chose "sometimes", and one parent chose "yes".

Two of the nine parents from the high achieving group who chose "yes" about their relationship with the teacher commented as follows:

Mohammed's father : " I always communicate with the teachers and I ask them to explain everything about my daughter and they always cooperate with me."

Walid's father who chose "sometimes" said: " Sometimes I feel that I am not convinced of the role of the teacher and this may be due to our differences in opinion. Also the time that is allowed for the meetings is not enough."

It is clear that there is an ease between the parents in the high achieving group and the teacher and even if not, it is due to the short time that is allowed for the meetings.

The six parents from the low achieving group who chose " No" commented as follows:

Ahlam's mother : " In fact I feel shy about talking to the teacher because my daughter has always failed."

Hala's father : " I can't discuss anything with them because they are educated and I am illiterate."

The three parents of Bader, Nawal and Yahya in the low achieving group who chose "sometimes" mentioned that they sometimes feel comfortable about talking to the teacher and sometimes not. Nurah's father who chose "yes" indicated that he was comfortable about talking to the teacher. He added that the teachers always help him and answer his questions."

It is clear that there is an unease between the parents in the low achieving group and the teachers which is due to their shame regarding the weakness of their children and to their low educational level.

When the nine parents of the high achieving group who chose "yes" were asked about their feelings with the social specialist they explained as follows:

Mohammed's father : " I always communicate with the social specialist and discuss with him any problems concerning Mohammed and I think this influences his achievement in the school, and also the place where he sits in the class or the class size."

Haya's father who chose "sometimes" in the high achieving group mentioned that sometimes he feels comfortable about talking with the social specialist but other times he feels that the social specialist does not have enough time to discuss with him the points that he came to talk about.

It is clear that there is a kind of ease between the parents of the high achieving group and the social specialist.

The five parents in the low achieving group who chose "No" indicated that the reason for not feeling at ease speaking to the social specialist was their feelings of shame when discussing their children's low achievement as follows:

Yahya's father : " In fact I rarely go to the social specialist because I feel shy of him because my son is a low achiever."

The four parents who chose "sometimes" explained their choice in these words:

Ahlam's mother: " In fact the social specialist always tries to get in touch with me but sometimes I feel embarrassed about discussing my daughter's problems with her."

Hala's father : " Sometimes I feel that it is difficult to speak to the social specialist because she is educated and I am not."

Nurah's father who chose "No" explained that he feels comfortable about discussing his daughter's problems with the social specialist.

It is clear that the shame of low achieving children and the low educational level of the parents may be considered reasons for the lack of ease between the parents and the social specialist in discussing their children's situation. From the above we can say that there is a kind of positive interaction and understanding between the parents of the high achieving group and the teachers and social specialist. It is clear also from the parents' explanations that there is an ongoing initiative on their behalf to communicate with the school.

We can conclude that the regular visits and regular communication that parents of the high achieving group maintain, creates a climate of understanding and allows an exchange of opinions between them and the teachers and the social specialist, so they feel comfortable about discussing their children's problems whether they are concerned with achievement or anything else. This reflects positively on their children by making them high achievers. The opposite is true of the low achieving group.

Al Khadra (1983) indicated that exchanged trust between parents and teachers encourages the parents to express their opinions and suggestions which leads to an improved educational process. Al Shatti (1984) indicated also that cooperation between the school and the home helps in finding solutions for some problems that the school may face or even that the parents may face at home, such as educational achievement of the student. The lack of visits and of communication between the parents of the low achieving group and their children's school were due to reasons like their shame regarding their children's low achievement, their lack of confidence in the benefits of visits and their own low educational level. All of these reasons which refer to their traditional cultural background have a role in creating barriers between the parents and the school. And this was in spite of the schools attempts to communicate with them as they indicated themselves.

As a result, the interaction and the communication between them becomes less, which then leads to the non-existence of channels to exchange experiences between them and the teachers and social specialists. This has a negative reaction on the children's achievement in this group. Also, we should indicate here that the only person who answered "yes" when he was asked about feelings at ease when speaking to the teacher and the social specialist was Nurah's father and this person is the only one who is a graduate. This indicates that the educational level of the parents and the cultural background of the family may have a role to play in the interaction between parents and the teachers and the social specialist.

#### **7.5.4 Communication Between Teacher, Social specialist and Parents :**

The researcher asked the teachers and social specialists a question about the communication between them and the parents. The exact question was, " How do you communicate with the parents?". All the teachers indicated that the communication between them and the parents is formal, whether it is by sending a letter to the parents

for a meeting in a order to solve a problem concerning their children (which is always done by the social specialist in the school), or by meeting the parents on Parents Day, which is four times a year. In addition, some teachers indicated that there is a group of parents who try to communicate in an informal way. Most of those parents are those whose children are high achievers. The purpose of those parents' communication is to ask about their children's achievement in the school. Some social specialists indicated that where there is a complaint from a teacher, or if there is continuing low achievement for some students, the only way to communicate with the parents is by written correspondence or by telephone. They indicated also that according to the nature of their job they are always available during all the formal working hours for any explanations. They also mentioned that they do not visit the family in their home.

When the teachers and social specialists were asked, "What problems do you face in communication with parents?", the teachers indicated that there are no problems with the parents of high achieving children, but the problems concentrated in the parents of low achieving children. Some of these problems are: first, no answer to requests for parents to attend except after a long time which complicates solving the problems. They indicated that they do not face this problem with the parents of high achieving group who visit and communicate with the school all the time without needing to be called. Second, there was no interest from the parents of low achieving students in teachers' suggestions about how to solve the problems of the child. As they indicated the parents of low achieving students want their children to succeed in any way without introducing help to the school. Third, there was no channel of communication with the parents of the low achieving group who are illiterate. They indicated that the problems of the illiterate parents or the parents who have a low educational level may hamper the improvement of the students' performance.



The social specialists indicated that there are no problems in communicating with the parents of the high achieving students, instead there is a cooperation and understanding between them. They added that the problems were concentrated in communicating with the parents of low achieving students. These problems are as follows: first, there was often no answer from the parents to the school call, or they attended late because they received the letter from the student, or because they couldn't read what the letter said, or because they do not realise the importance of the letter for the improvement of their children's achievement, or because they are busy with other matters, all of which hamper the solving of problems. Second, there is not enough awareness by some parents and no acceptance of the fact that their children may fail or make mistakes; they want their children to succeed in any way possible. Third, there is no cooperation from some parents in solving their children's problems. Fourth, the parents seldom visit the school. Fifth, sometimes the parents avoid giving their telephone number to the school.

From the above we can say that there are many problems of communication between the teachers, the social specialists and the parents of low achieving students, which then have a negative reaction on these parents' children's achievement. The lack of permanent communication between home and school weakens the possibility of building a channel for understanding between home and school. Al khadra (1983) indicated that the lack of a relationship between school and home prevents the school from learning from the parents' experiences and prevents the two sides sharing so they can work together.

It is clear from the teachers' and the social specialists' explanations that one of the communication problems is the low educational and cultural level of the parents, which makes them sometimes avoid giving their telephone numbers to the school or

which makes them not accept their children's failure and then not respond to the school's call.

If we look at the recent ways of communicating between school and home we find that, as the teachers and the social specialists indicated, communication depends on written message or sometimes by telephone. There are no visits to the students' houses as a means of communicating. However, as we know, visits have a big role to play in removing the barriers between school and home and in giving a clear picture of the real social economic situation of the family. Such visits can facilitate building a channel for understanding and discussion which may benefit the students and then it may improve their educational achievement.

In a study by Lagoy (1987) about improving students' attendance and achievement through intervention of a student support (Home-School Liaison Committee), he indicates that a number of social workers and some teachers carried out visits to homes in order to set up and improve relationships between themselves and the parents. These visits had positive results in establishing a good relationship with the students and their parents. Also, the average of students' attendance in school and their achievement were improved.

## **7.6 The School's Treatment of the Low Achieving Students and Parents :**

### **7.6.1 Monitoring Low Achieving students:**

The teachers and the social specialists were asked this question, " According to your experience, do you find enough time to monitor low achieving students during the class?"

Four teachers mentioned that they have enough time to observe the low achieving students during the class. The other six teachers indicated that they do not have enough time to observe low achieving students. They explained that this is due to two reasons: First, they have a big curriculum which has to be completed by a certain deadline. Second, they have administrative activities which they have to do. Three

social specialists mentioned that sometimes they have enough time to observe the low achieving students while the other seven social specialists indicated that they do not have enough time to observe them. They explained that this is due to two reasons: First, they are occupied with permanent administrative matters and communicating with the parents. Second, there is a large number of students in the school and there are just one or two social specialists.

From the above it is clear that the teachers and the social specialists do not always have enough time to monitor the low achieving students. The teachers explained this by saying that they have a sizable curriculum to cover and a number of administrative activities they had to do. The social specialists explained that they are occupied with administrative matters and that the number of them is small compared with the number of the students in the school.

#### **7.6.2 Recognising the Low Achieving Students :**

The researcher asked the teachers and the social specialists about pinpointing the low achieving students with this question, " How do you pinpoint the low achieving students in the class?", The teachers said that they recognise the low achieving students by talking with them and becoming aware of them during the class and by giving oral and written tests to them. However, the social specialists indicated that they recognise the low achieving students only by teachers' transferring the students to them.

It is clear that the process of recognising the low achieving students is easy for the teacher because he/she has contact with them, but the social specialist can only recognise them by having them referred to her/him by the teacher.

#### **7.6.3 The Strategies Used with the Low Achieving Students:**

When the teachers and the social specialists were asked this question " What strategies (if any) do you use to deal with these children?", the teachers indicated that

there are many ways they use for dealing with the low achieving students. For example they pay more attention to their homework, they encourage them in the class by clapping and by praise, they provide remedial classes for them, they transfer them to the social specialist to get more information on the reasons for their low achievement, and to find these reasons, they ask the social specialist to arrange a meeting with the parents if the low achievement is continuing.

The social specialists stated that they also used encouragement with the low achieving students by praise and by giving them presents to improve their academic level.

They added that they arranged interviews with the parents to find out the reasons that led to the low achievement. However, they mentioned that the parents do not always cooperate with them by not responding to the school call. They added that sometimes, but not always, they tried to obtain information from the students' files; however these files did not have enough information about the family, especially with regard to accurate information about such things as divorce and polygamy. This prevented them from having complete information about the student and his/her social situation.

From the preceding we can say that some of the strategies that the teachers and the social specialists use to deal with the low achieving students are encouragement, and advice. They also help the students by monitoring their homework, and offering remedial classes and by arranging meetings with their parents.

In general, from the interviews of the teachers and social specialists it is clear that they have a role in recognising low achieving children. Also they try to improve the children's educational level by communicating with their families. However, the lack of cooperation of the low achievers' parents and the small number of visits of those parents work in the opposite direction of these efforts. This led to a weakness in finding quick solutions for the children's school problems at the right time which in turn affected the children's achievement.

## **7.7 Conclusion:**

From the above it is clear that the interviews gave a clear picture of the internal situation of the families, it also demonstrated the effect of the cultural, educational and social situations on the internal activities of the family. Because the researcher was able to be party to a wide number of observations, he gained a more profound understanding involving a logical sequence of the cases. This gave a close picture of the reality of the cases and the family situations. Moreover, by using a friendly manner, including becoming close to the student and by applying all the interview procedures, the researcher was able to obtain more real and valid information.

From examining the different general factors inside the home environment in both the high and low achieving groups it was observed that there were clear differences which could be seen in a variety of areas. These areas included the nature of the internal relationship between the family and the children, the kind of family behaviours, aspirations, expectations and thoughts, the internal environment of the home, and the educational cultural level of the family. After investigating the general factors of the high achieving group during the interview, it was observed that in this group there is more stability between the mother and the father, more sharing in solving children's problems, higher authority and higher control and the parents also offer all kinds of rewards both psychological and material as well as a focus on the children's attainment of a high level of education and high level job. In addition, the parents in this group were interested in following the educational system in Kuwait and generally encouraged their children to read and do their best. These parents respected their children, implanted self-confidence in them from childhood and gave their children freedom to choose their future career. They also allowed their children to choose their friends but maintained supervision of this. In the high achieving group the parents also supported their children both directly and indirectly by providing such things as a suitable quiet place for homework, help in organising their children's time and stimuli, such as educational video programmes, cultural magazines and so

on to help to increase the children's general cultural level. They concentrated on motivating their children through creating competition between them and by encouraging an exchange of information. Finally, they were interested in the quality and quantity of time spent with their children. This same interest in the home was reflected in interest outside the home, especially with regard to forming a good relationship between the home and the school.

By contrast, analysis of the general factors of the low achieving group showed that there was a weakness in satisfying many of the same factors which had been observed in the high achieving group. This weakness was due to the low socio-economic and educational level of the parents and to their preoccupation in their work and with the rest of their families, this was especially true for those who had big families resulting from polygamy.

Moreover, from studying the general factors of all cases it became clear that these factors also indicate the existence of certain basic factors including stability in the family, direction and autonomy in the family, self concept, parental help, rewards and punishment, parents' expectations and aspirations, role of peers, homework, siblings achievement, family and school relationship, model of parents and time spent (see Table 7.2) all of which may have a big role in affecting the educational achievement of the children. This will be discussed in more detail in the discussion chapter.

**Table 7.1** Information About the High Achieving Group's and the Low Achieving Group's Parents Gained From the Interviews.

|                                    | <b>Group No. 1</b>   | <b>Group No. 2</b>  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Father's occupation                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- five professional and Technical workers</li> <li>- two Administrative and Managerial</li> <li>- two clerical and related workers</li> <li>- one service worker</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one Administrative and Managerial</li> <li>- two clerical and related workers</li> <li>- one sales worker</li> <li>- two service workers</li> <li>- three unskilled workers</li> <li>- one not work</li> </ul> |
| Mother's occupation                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- three Administrative and Managerial</li> <li>- two clerical and related workers</li> <li>- five not work</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one clerical and related workers</li> <li>- one service worker</li> <li>- eight not work</li> </ul>  |
| Father's education                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- five graduate and post graduate</li> <li>- three Diploma</li> <li>- one secondary</li> <li>- one elementary</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one graduate and post graduate</li> <li>- two intermediate</li> <li>- two elementary</li> <li>- five no education (illiterate)</li> </ul>  |
| Mother's education                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- three graduate and post graduate</li> <li>- one Diploma</li> <li>- three secondary</li> <li>- two intermediate</li> <li>- one elementary</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one graduate and post graduate</li> <li>- one intermediate</li> <li>- one read and write</li> <li>- seven no education (illiterate)</li> </ul>   |
| Family size                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one 1-2 child</li> <li>- seven 3-4 children</li> <li>- one 5-7 children</li> <li>- one 8-10 children</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- two 3-4 children</li> <li>- one 5-7 children</li> <li>- two 8-10 children</li> <li>- four more than 10</li> </ul>  |
| Family income                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- three 701-900 KD</li> <li>- one 901-1200 KD</li> <li>- six 1201 and over</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- two 170-500 KD</li> <li>- five 501-700 KD</li> <li>- one 701-900 KD</li> <li>- one 901-1200 KD</li> </ul>  |
| The social situation of the family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ten parents live with each others</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- five polygamy</li> <li>- one separation due to the partner death</li> <li>- four live with each other</li> </ul>   |

**Table 7.2** The Difference Between the High Achieving Group and Low Achieving Groups in the General Factors Which Indicated the Existence of the Basic Factors.

| Basic factors                          | High achievement  | Low achievement   |
|--|---|---|
| 1 Stability in family                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- father and mother live together</li> <li>- the mother and father sharing together in solving their children's problems</li> <li>- the home authority described with high control and high support</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some parents live together and others not (due to divorce and polygamy).</li> <li>- low sharing between the father and mother in solving their children's problems.</li> <li>- the home authority described with whether high control and low support or low control and low support.</li> </ul>   |
| 2 Direction and autonomy in the family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interest to follow the educational system.</li> <li>- interest to encourage the children to try and read.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low in following the educational system.</li> <li>- low interest to encourage the children to try and read.</li> </ul>   |
| 3 Self concept                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interest in respecting the children</li> <li>- giving the children freedom to choose their future careers and their friends with maintaining supervision.</li> <li>- implanting self-confidence since childhood.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low interest in respecting the children</li> <li>- some times giving the children freedom to choose their future careers and their friends with low supervision of their choice.</li> <li>- low interest in implanting self-confidence since childhood.</li> </ul>   |
| 4 Parental help                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interest in helping the children direct way or indirect way if needed.</li> <li>- organising the children's time.</li> <li>- providing homework necessities of good place and quietness.</li> <li>- providing things that help to increase the general culture like cultural magazines, etc.</li> <li>- interest in listening to the children, sharing them their hobbies and providing their hobbies instruments.</li> <li>- encouraging and show happiness to their children even if they have low marks.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low interest in helping the children direct way or indirect way if needed.</li> <li>- low interest in organising the children's time.</li> <li>- low interest in providing homework necessities of good place and quietness.</li> <li>- low interest in providing things that help to increase the general culture like cultural magazines, etc.</li> <li>- low interest in listening to their children, sharing them their hobbies and providing their hobbies instruments.</li> <li>- low interest in encouraging and showing happiness to their children even they have simple improvement in achievement.</li> </ul> |



Table 7.2 (Continued)

| Basic factors                           | High achievement   | Low achievement   |
|---|--|---|
| 5 Reward and punishment                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using all kinds of rewards whether psychological or material.</li> <li>- low using beating in dealing with the children.</li> <li>- using scientific method in analysing problems to know its reasons.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low interest in using all kinds of rewards whether psychological or material.</li> <li>- using beating styles in dealing with the children.</li> <li>- low interest in using scientific method in analysing problems to know its reasons.</li> </ul> |
| 6 Parents' expectations and aspirations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- high expectations for the children to have high education.</li> <li>- high aspiration for the children to have high jobs.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- middle to low expectations for the children to have low education.</li> <li>- middle to low aspiration for the children to have middle to low jobs.</li> </ul>   |
| 7 Role of peers                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interest in supervising the children and implanting self-confidence for good choice to the friends.</li> <li>- interest to choose the high achievers friends to help their children.</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low supervising the children in choosing their friends.</li> <li>- low interest to the quality of the children's friends whether are low or high achievers.</li> </ul>   |
| 8 Homework                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- helping the children in the homework by clarifying examples.</li> <li>- giving enough time to the homework.</li> <li>- providing the homework necessities inside the home.</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low interest in helping the children in doing their homework.</li> <li>- low interest in giving enough time to the homework.</li> <li>- low interest in providing the homework necessities inside the home.</li> </ul>                               |
| 9 Siblings achievement                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- encouraging the children to exchange information.</li> <li>- motivating the children and creating competition between them.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low interest in encouraging the children to exchange information.</li> <li>- low interest in motivating the children and low creating competition between them.</li> </ul>   |

Table 7.2 (Continued)

| <b>Basic factors</b>              | <b>High achievement</b>  | <b>Low achievement</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| 10 Family and school relationship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interest in communicating and visiting the school.</li> <li>- forming good relationships between the parents and the teachers and the social specialists.</li> <li>- sharing in school activities.</li> <li>- confidence in the importance of the role of the school</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low interest in communicating and visiting the school.</li> <li>- low interest in forming good relationships between the parents and the teachers and the social specialists.</li> <li>- low interest in sharing in school activities.</li> <li>- lack of confidence of the importance of the role of the school.</li> </ul> |
| 11 Models of parents              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- similarity between the parents positive ideas and behaviours with the children.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- similarity between the parents negative ideas and behaviours with their children.</li> </ul>   |
| 12 Time spent                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interest in the quality and quantity of time spent with the children.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low interest in the quality and quantity of time spent with the children.</li> </ul>   |

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **CASE STUDIES**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter investigates four individual cases which are different from the cases carried out in the interviews: two cases of students achieving high educational performance, and two cases of students achieving low educational performance. These cases attempt to illuminate whether the quality of the home affects educational achievement. The aim of these studies is to investigate in depth information about the students' lifestyle, that may affect their educational achievement. In addition, an investigation as to why some students have high achievement although they are from low quality homes and vice-versa was conducted. Yin, (1989, p.23) wrote: " A case study is an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used."

The four students were chosen from the categories of high and low achievement. In order to obtain more information about the cases, the researcher did not depend on the main interviews with students, and their parents nor on the main direct observations, but instead used specific meetings with pupils' teachers, social specialists and their friends. Also, the researcher took into account the relevant school documents, teachers' reports, teachers' evaluation of homework, and pupils' files. The researcher tried to carry out interviews with both mothers and fathers in each case. In each of the four cases the researcher began his interview by breaking the ice and then explaining to the parents the goal of the scientific research. He also explained that the information given to him would be used only for research purposes. After these explanations the students and their parents become more co-operative and comfortable.

In the interviews with students and their parents the researcher tried not to be guided by preconceived notions, to be a good listener, and not to be trapped by his own prejudices. Also, he tried to be flexible and straight-forward, so that newly encountered situations would be seen as opportunities, not threats. The researcher has written all four cases in the same format for the ease of the reader.

## **8.2 The Family Life of High Achieving Pupils:**

### **8.2.1 Case No 1 ( Ammar: High Achievement)**

#### **8. 2.1.1 Personal Information:**

Ammar is the oldest child in his family. His age is thirteen. Ammar has a strong personality and is self-confident when speaking. He uses examples when he speaks to support what he says. Also, it was observed that his clothes were tidy and although his clothes were the same style of school clothes ( white shirt and gray trousers), they seemed to be of good quality; such clothing is expensive in Kuwait.

Ammar's father is forty-five years old, he has BA in engineering from America and he is a manager in his own private firm. He was happy to accept the researcher's questions.

Ammar's mother is thirty-six years old, she has BA in education, and she is the deputy headmistress in a secondary school. It seems that she was tidy not just in her clothes, but also in the house. He has two sisters and one brother: Maryam who is ten years old, Fatema who is nine years old, and Ahmed who is eight years old. The family income is about 5000 KD which indicates that this family has a high income.

#### **8.2.1.2 The Relationship between the Parents and Ammar, including their way of treating him :**

When the researcher asked the parents for the interview by telephone he was immediately welcomed by the father. On the day of the interview both the father and mother were waiting for the researcher's visit. They were completely prepared for this visit: the room for the visit was organised and full of beautifully coloured house plants and Teeb ( a kind of perfume which is used for scenting houses) and Bokhour ( a kind of incense which has a nice smell and which is used especially for houses and which is expensive). Also, there were three high quality plates prepared for tea and cakes. It was observed that there was a kind of sharing between the father and the mother in response to the questions and in giving explanations during the interview. There were also smiles and laughter between them. When the researcher asked Ammar's parents if they listen to what their son says about school, Ammar's father said: " Listening to Ammar or to any one of my children is one of the daily activities that I maintain, and so does my wife. This is so that we can recognise our children's school problems or personal problems, and then give them suitable solutions for those problems based on our experience. We do this to help them achieve a happy life. " Ammar's mother added, " Listening to what Ammar says about his problems, and giving him solutions and advice reinforces the relationship between us which I think has a role in his success in school and in his life."

Ammar' himself indicated that continual listening of his parents make him feel that they were like his friends. He said he does not hide anything from them.

With regard to the advice of his parents Ammar said: " My father and my mother always encourage me to be independent and self-confident when I face any problem, but if I can't solve this problem by myself, I don't waste my time worrying instead I ask my parents to help me and to tell me of their experience."

Ammar's mother said: " I always implant self-confidence and independence in Ammar and his brother and sisters minds to enable them to achieve success in their life."

This family does not use beating as a form of discipline. As Ammar's father said with wonder and astonishment: "Beating is not a civilized way to solve a student's low achievement problem or any other problem. I think parents should analyse the reasons that lead to these problems by speaking to their children, not by beating them." Ammar, as well, indicated that his father never beat him. Instead he said that his father depended on an analytical way in solving his problems by investigating the reasons for it and finding a suitable solution.

One of Ammar's teachers indicated that "Ammar's father is very conscientious about his son's achievement". He added that Ammar's father visits him in school to discuss with him and to hear his opinion about various matters concerned with the modern educational style. This is to help him in dealing with his children. He also asks about anything that might be hampering Ammar's achievement in school.

Since Ammar's father is so conscientious, he always feels happy when Ammar has high marks in school examinations. As Ammar said:" My father and my mother feel happy when I have high marks in the exams, which create a climate of happiness in the family." Ammar's father added: " My wife and I always feel happy when Ammar has high marks in the exam and we also encourage him to maintain that level. This may create a climate of happiness and encouragement in the family which I think may push Ammar and his brother and sisters to have high achievement."

.Regarding the rewards for success, Ammar's father said: " I always reward Ammar and I think reward has a role in encouraging Ammar to have high achievement. Also, I give Ammar the freedom to choose the reward that he likes".

Ammar not only has the freedom to choose his reward, but he also has the freedom to choose his future career, as Ammar's father said :

" I always give Ammar the freedom to choose the future career that he wants."

Ammar's mother added: " My husband and I always give our children a clear picture of different careers. We explain the positive and negative side of each career and then we allow them the freedom to choose what they want. This discussion between our children and ourselves may be a motive for them to achieve their future careers and this requires them to increase their efforts in school. For, example, my son Ammar wants to complete his higher education by obtaining a Ph.D in the field that he likes which is computer engineering. So he always asks his father to bring him home new computer programs. Also, he spends a long time with the computer, especially during holidays." Ammar's father support what his wife said by saying that he wants all his children to finish higher education, especially Ammar. He expects him to obtain a higher degree as indicated by using the word "Kafo" ( a traditional word which means that the person is able to do what is expected of him).

Obtaining a level of higher education is what Ammar indicated when he said: " I always hope to obtain a high educational qualification, which is a Ph.D in computer engineering. In fact, my father has a role in pushing and encouraging me to obtain this to benefit myself and my country. He always tell me about his experience in studying and how he obtained a BA from America. He tells me about the problems that he faced and how he was able to surmount them by patience in order to obtain what he wanted." Ammar indicated that the relationship between him and his parents is happy. As he said: " The relationship between me and my mother and father is happy, my father treats me as his friend. Most of the time he takes me with him to his work, he gives me the freedom to try the electronic equipment, especially the computer. I feel he likes me and he wants me to be happy because he is interested in giving me what I want. Also, my mother loves me too; she takes care of me; she helps me if I need her help and she gives me everything I need for my study or for anything else. Happiness is a basic thing between us."

### **8.2.1. 3 The Parents' Supervision Inside and Outside the Home :**

When Ammar's parents were asked whether it is important to them that Ammar has high marks, Ammar's father said distinctly after changing his sitting position to sit straight:

" The matter of Ammar having high marks in school is very important to me, in fact I always plan things to develop the superiority of my children just as an engineer plans his project. I do this by providing my children with all the ways and means to stimulate them as much as I can in the house, for example, cultural books and magazines act as a cultural incentives, and educational and scientific programmes are educational aids. I also provide a quiet environment for them".

Ammar added that : " It is not just very important to my father that I have high marks in school, but also that he is interested in the quality of the information that I receive and its role in my life. However, at the same time, he always holds me responsible when I get low marks and he asks me the reasons for that even if I drop by only one mark. Also, he visits my school and meets my teacher for each subject that I get low marks in to discuss with him the reasons."

In addition Ammar's parents were not only interested in his marks but also in his homework. As Ammar's father said : " In spite of the confidence that we give to Ammar, his mother and I always ask him about his homework to share with him and to ascertain his performance level in order to explain whatever is difficult to him." It was observed from Ammar's copybook that his father always tries to write small sentences for the teachers to thank them for their help and their supervision, or to ask them for some explanations of the way of teaching or anything else that is unclear.

One of Ammar's teacher's explained: " These sentences play a role in strengthening the relationship between Ammar's parents and me and to build a channel of cooperation between us."



Regarding the time that Ammar's parents spend with his homework, Ammar indicated that because of his father's business in his work, he spends just one hour with his homework, however his mother spends about three to four hours with him and with his brother and sisters to answer their questions. As she said: " I divide spending my time with my children everyday into three parts: The first part is for doing homework and giving some additional exercises; the second part is to find out about the new things that they studied in school and to give more examples by way of explanation; the third part is to discuss the things that they will study the day after and to give them some information about that".

Ammar's father as well added: " I am busy in my institution but I set aside about one hour everyday to find out about my children's homework, also I spend four hours at the weekend with them for a general review. At the same time I am always with my family during lunch time and dinner time."

Regarding those who are the most encouraging about his study, Ammar said: " My mother and my father are the people who most encourage me to study".

As for the role of the family in organising their children's time, Ammar said: " My mother and my father always help me in organising my time, in which there is a time for playing, time for studying and another time for reading cultural books and scientific magazines, which they always encourage me to read. Also, my father is strict about me doing my homework before playing or watching TV".

Also, Ammar's father indicated: " Ammar and I always organise a timetable after Ammar has to express his opinion about it, and so we are able to give each aspect the right emphases whether it is for playing or for his hobby or for doing homework". Ammar's mother added: " I am strict about getting my children to go to bed early at 8.30 o' clock in order for them to get enough rest for the next day".

One of Ammar's teachers indicated that Ammar always produces organised ideas and his homework is also organised. Also, he is able to take in new material since he prepares for the lesson beforehand.

With regard to supervising Ammar's friends, Ammar said: " I choose my friends from successful students. My father and my mother give me the freedom to choose my friends but they supervise my choice and advise me if I have bad choice. Also, I choose successful friends in order to benefit from their experiences and to give them my experience which make us all improve our performance in school because we like to compete with each other". Ammar's father added: " Ammar's mother and I not only supervise his choice, but also we always try to get to know his friends' families". Omar a friend of Ammar indicated that they have been friends since primary school. He added that he always asks Ammar about anything unclear at school, and that Ammar does the same thing, also they have the same hobbies. Omar added that Ammar's parents always communicate and visit his own family".

Regarding Ammar's hobbies, he said: " I like mechanics, engineering and computer programs". Ammar's mother added: " Ammar's father always encourages Ammar's hobbies and he shares doing them with him in his spare time or in the holidays. Also, we built an external room in the house for our children to pursue their hobbies in. This room contains engineering equipment, electronic equipment, some sports equipment, some equipment for self amusement and a computer has educational programs such as language learning, engineering, painting and an English- Arabic dictionary.

#### **8.2.1.4 The Home Atmosphere and Environment :**

The area of Ammar's house it is about 750 square m. It contains two floors, the first floor contains one big reception room, one dining room, one living room, an office room and two bathrooms. The second floor contains six bedrooms, five bathrooms and two halls.

The house contains excellent furniture which is brightly coloured. Also the house has a big garden which contains some chairs for the family to sit in, and in the garden there is a beautiful artificial waterfall, which make the place very lovely. In addition, outside the building there are external rooms for the gardener, for the cook, and for the house keeper. Also, near the garden, there is a big room which contains some sports equipment, a computer, and some educational toys. The main library in the house is in the living room. It contains a variety of books, and is divided into three parts: a part for books, another part for magazines and newspapers, and another part for video tapes. As Ammar's father said: " The house contains a library in the living room which is for all the family. There is another library which is especially for me and is in the office. Also, I bring home scientific magazines like " Al Arab", "Al Waey Al Eslamy", and something special for children like "Al Arabi Al Sageer", "Saed", "Majed". Also, I usually bring home social magazines not only in the Arabic language, but also in the English language. And I discuss with my children the subjects that are in the magazines whether it is at lunchtime, or dinnertime, or in the evening in the living room where all the family are together. Ammar indicated that : " There are some educational tapes which provide us with general information and experiences and which my mother usually brings home to us". Ammar's mother mentioned that because her children like computer programs especially the educational ones, she set aside one hour in the weekend to share with them in learning these programs.

Ammar's father added: " I always encourage my children to read everything new especially at the weekend to be aware of what is happening in the world. I think this has a role to play in increasing their knowledge and experience".

Regarding room distribution in the house, Ammar's family provide a separate room for every child. Ammar's room contains a bed, cupboard, desk, chair, enough light, a typewriter and a small library. This library contains some cultural books and scientific

magazines which are concerned with computers and mechanics. His room overlooks the garden which gives a good environment for studying. Ammar's father added: " We always make sure Ammar has enough quietness for doing his homework". Also Ammar's mother indicated that she always tries to create a quiet atmosphere for her children because she considers that quietness is one of the most important factors that lead to feeling comfortable while doing homework. As she said: " During the exam period the house is mostly quiet, because I think quietness is essential for doing revision and for doing homework.". Also, she added: " In fact, during the final exams I always cancel my appointments and my social visits in order to be free enough to help my children by conveying an atmosphere of quietness and by giving them some drinks if they need them".

Concerning the achievement levels of the other children, Ammar's father said: " High achievement is not only limited to Ammar, but also to his other children. They all get superior marks in their studies".

Regarding whether Ammar receives respect from his family or not, Ammar said: " I have always received respect from all the family since I was young. My father has a role in that because he has always taught us to respect all people, whether they are young or old, so the relationship between us all is strong and full of mutual respect. Also, I think the understanding and sharing climate that exists in my family has a role in creating respect between us".

With regard to whether Ammar's father and his wife share in solving their children's school problems, Ammar's father answered with astonishment at this question (as if he should not be asked such a question): " Yes, yes the sharing between my wife and me in solving our children's school problems is an important thing in our life". Ammar's mother added: " Sharing between me and my husband is not only limited to solving our children's

problems, but also extends to the decision-making for every aspect of the family, as you know one hand cannot clap."

#### **8.2.1.5 The Relationship and The Communication between Ammar's Family and The School :**

The social specialist at Ammar's school indicated that Ammar's father's activity is noticed in school. In spite of his busy timetable he always gives to the school whether by material donation when the school has special projects, or by sharing in the activities of the meetings with the parents on Parents' Day. Also, he always goes to the school to learn of his son's progress.

One of Ammar's teachers indicated that Ammar's father always visits the school, and not only on Parents' Day, to discuss with the teachers his son's achievement level. He added that these visits are not limited to Ammar's father but also include his mother. Ammar's father indicated that he always visits school because he thinks that visiting school has a role in creating cooperation between school and home. The school reports indicated that Ammar has been a superior student since primary school and he kept with that until the intermediate school.

Regarding the relationship between Ammar and his teachers and his level of ease in speaking with the social specialist, Ammar indicated that he does not find any difficulty in speaking with the social specialist and that there is always good relationship between him and his teachers. As he said: " I consider them to be like my father or my friends, and I think my father has played a big role in creating this confidence. He always advises me to respect my teachers and not to be shy about discussing with them anything that is not clear to me".

Ammar's father indicated that he always feels comfortable when speaking with teachers and the social specialist. He added that he visits them once a month at least to determine

his son's standard and to discuss with the teachers all matters concerned with his son's progress.

### **8.2.2 Discussion and Conclusion Of Case No 1**

From the above we conclude that Ammar's high achievement is a result of relationships, treatment, behaviour and environment that have been created inside the family to help Ammar attain a high achievement. It seems that the relationship between Ammar and his family is full of love and understanding which leads indirectly to increase Ammar's achievement. The strong relationship between Ammar and his family is not coincidental but is due to several factors.

Firstly, there is the parental interest in listening to Ammar's problems, school problems or any other problems. In addition, Ammar's parents provide their own experience of life to their son, providing him with the outcome of successful experiments. As Ammar's mother indicated: " Listening to what Ammar says of his problems, and giving him solutions and advice reinforces the relationship between him and me and I think this has a role in his success in school and in his life." Ammar's father also said : " Listening to Ammar....is one of the daily activities that I maintain...".

Through listening to Ammar, his parents feel they are closer to their son and this removes the barriers between them and him. Ammar himself noted that his parents' listening to him made him feel that they are like his friends. This removal of barriers may lead to a kind of frankness and cooperation between them which is particularly useful in case of any problems which Ammar may face. This leads to the possibility of finding quick solutions for any problems as soon as they arise, and thus they can solve problems which may affect achievement from the beginning.

Secondly, the parents' encouragement to build self-confidence and independence in Ammar has accustomed him to that style of behaviour in his life and this helps him to

reach a high level of achievement and increase his efforts in school, as Ammar's mother said: " I always encourage self-confidence and independence in Ammar and his brothers and sisters' minds to enable them to be successful in life".

Thirdly, the parents use rational methods based on analysis to solve Ammar's problems: they teach him to discover the reasons for these problems and then find the solution for them. They avoid using beating as a form of punishment in the case of low achievement. This helps him to find quick solutions for his problems as soon as they arise and this then helps him to continue to achieve. Using rational methods is not limited to solving Ammar's problems, but is also used in asking about and discussing with Ammar's teachers modern trends in education and educational references which might help to solve educational problems that they may face. This indirectly benefits Ammar and creates an educational environment which encourages high achievement.

Fourthly, the family shows its happiness to Ammar when he obtain high marks, thus creating a positive atmosphere in the house which encourages Ammar and his brothers to continue to achieve. This parental happiness affects positively Ammar's achievement and strengthens the relationship between him and his parents.

Fifthly, by giving Ammar rewards when he gets high marks in the exams and by giving him the freedom to choose the reward he wants, his parents encourage him to increase his performance and this once again strengthens the relationship between him and his parents.

Sixthly, Ammar's parents give him the freedom to choose his future career. They take time to explain the negative and positive points of every possibility and support Ammar's interests with cultural incentives like magazines and programmes relating to his career interests. This motivates Ammar in that he wants to satisfy his own ambitions by doing hardwork and attaining good results at school.

Seventhly, the parents give Ammar freedom, love, happiness, as well as providing the essential needs and care to help him to find a kind of harmony in his house. This creates a suitable environment for him in which to achieve his potential. as he indicated with regard to his father: " He takes me with him to his work, he gives me freedom... I feel he likes me and he wants me to be happy...he is interested to bring me everything I want." Ammar indicated the following about his mother: " My mother loves me too, she takes care of me.. and she brings me everything I need."

We can conclude that all the above stated factors help to support the relationship between Ammar and his parents and help to create a suitable climate for high achievement. However, a further point to discuss is: what are Ammar's parents ambitions for and expectations of him and how do these affect Ammar's achievement?

It was observed that Ammar's father's ambition for Ammar was high. He expects Ammar to finish a high level of education, to obtain Ph.D. The father's ambition is in agreement with his expectations of Ammar to reach that level of education. Also there is an agreement between Ammar's father's ambition and Ammar's own ambition. Ammar indicated that his father played a major role in pushing him to satisfy his dream to obtain a Ph.D in computer sciences by telling him his previous experience and by motivating him to perform more and more, thus leading to high achievement.

Regarding supervision, it was observed that the family supervises Ammar in and outside the home. This supervision can be seen in the following: Firstly, the parents provide cultural incentives, scientific programmes and educational books inside the house which clarify some areas that Ammar studies in school and which also add new information for him. Secondly, Ammar's parents are interested in his achievement and watch his improvement. Thirdly, the parents monitor his homework and ask about it, creating a



confidence between Ammar and his parents. Fourthly, the parents find enough time to spend with Ammar on his homework, in spite of their own busy schedules. They share with him by discussing topics and giving more information which helps to clarify the given subject. Fifthly, they organise Ammar's time in order to help him find enough time to do his homework. They set aside time for watching TV and reading books, and insist on an exact time for going to bed. Sixthly, the parents give Ammar the freedom to choose his friends but supervise his choices and know his friends' families to make sure about the environment that Ammar is involved in. Seventhly, Ammar's parents are interested in his hobbies and spend time with him on his hobbies during the weekend. They also provide all requisites for his hobbies. All these previous points show how the role of the family indirectly encourages Ammar towards high achievement.

It was observed that the climate in the house act as a motive for high achievement.

Firstly, the main library in the house is in the living room in order for every one in the family to have easy access to read what they want. Secondly, there are plenty of magazines and scientific video programmes for children and the parents discuss with their children the subjects in these magazines and programmes. Thirdly, a special room is provided for Ammar for doing homework. It has all of the requirements necessary (light, quiet, etc.) for encouraging good study. Fourthly, there is general quietness in the house. Fifthly, there is respect between the family. Sixthly, the parents share and agree in their decision making and in solving Ammar's problems. Seventhly, Ammar's brothers and friends are all high achievers. All these points play a role in creating a suitable climate for Ammar, to encourage high achievement.

It was observed that the good relationship between Ammar and his family, the supervision, the high ambitions and expectations of parents, and the suitable climate in the house are all reflected the relationship between home and school. This connection is

highlighted by the father's donation of both money and time to school activities. Ammar's parents interest in following Ammar's improvements in school also builds a channel between him and Ammar's teachers and the social specialist. Ammar's father also has instructed Ammar to respect his teachers and the social specialist. This provides an integrated environment for Ammar which helps him to increase his level of achievement.

In general, it was observed that the socio-economic situation of Ammar's family also plays a basic role in the behaviour and relationships of Ammar's family, which enrich the home environment and motivate for high achievement. The high educational level, the high economic level and the high functional level of Ammar's parents are the basic factors which produce internal home environment that then interacts with the school environment. This provides the integral environment that investigate the high achievement for Ammar.

### **8.2.3 Case Study No 2 (Salama: High Achievement)**

#### **8.2.3.1 Personal Information**

Salma is the fifth child of seven brothers and sisters: Mohammed is 26 years old, Saleh is 25 years old, Maryam is 22 years old, Ahmed is 11 years old, Adnan is 9 years old, and Fawzi is 8 years old. Salma is thirteen years old and three months. She has a very strong personality which is noticeable by the words she uses when you speak to her. During her interview, it was observed that she was wearing normal school clothing ( the school offers these clothes at a low price ). Her clothes are neat which means that she takes care of her appearance. Salma's father is 57 years old. He works as a simple technician in a department of a ministry, in the evening he spends time with his children. He does not have a school certificate, but learned how to write and read by experience. Although he is formally uneducated when you speak to him you feel that he is an educated person.

This was shown by his interest in the subject researched, by using to some educational terms and knowing the benefits of some educational aspects. Afterwards it appeared that this was due to his contact with his children's teachers and his interest in what is of benefit to his children. Salma's mother is 53 years old, she reads and writes. She does not have a school certificate but she is now in the third year of primary school in Kuwait Illiteracy Elimination Center ( a center for adult education ). She is a house wife. Although she is uneducated, she was helpful and cooperated well during the interview. The family income is about 600 KD which indicates that the family income belongs to the range from less than average to low.

#### **8.2.3.2 The Relationship between Salma and her Parents:**

When the researcher called Salma's parents for an interview he was welcomed by Salma's father. At five-thirty, the time set for the interview with this family, Salma's father greeted the researcher and then he took him to the living room. It was a simple room: its furniture consisted of matareh and masaned ( a traditional spongy mattress which is used for sitting on and which is cheap). The room was tidy and on the walls there were some pictures of the children and some of their attainment certificates.

The big surprise for the researcher was that Salma's mother came into the room and shared in the interview. Although she covers her hair and face she insisted on sharing in the interview. Her desire to participate was an opportunity for the researcher to know more about this family. Although the educational level of the parents is low, the researcher did not have any difficulties in making his questions understood. He found a perfect sharing between the parents and received clear answers from the parents to his questions.

Regarding the question of whether Salma's parents listen to what Salma says about school, Salma's father replied: " I always listen to what Salma says about school, and I do

so with all my children when I collect them from school. Also, I usually discuss with them the subjects they had during the lunch or the dinner".

Salma's mother added: " I think listening to what the children say about school is very important since it helps us find out about the problems and difficulties that they face, and then we do our best to help them to solve these problems."

As Salma indicated: " My father and my mother always listen with concern to what I say about my school problems or about any other difficulties I might face. They do this even though they do not know all the scientific words that I sometimes use when I speak about my school."

From Salma and Salma's parents' explanations, it may be observed that the family has a role to play in the encouraging of self-confidence and independence in the children.

When Salma was asked whether she asks her parents' advice in her school works she said: " My mother and my father have encouraged my self-confidence and independence since I was young, especially when I face problems. But if I can't find solutions to these problems I usually ask my parents to help me and advise me. They help me and advise me as much as they can. For example, my father helps me to read the Quran correctly. Also, if they find that they can't help me they advise me to ask my older brothers or sisters to help me."

Salma's father indicated: " Self-confidence and independence are bases which parents should encourage in their children's personalities, because this may help them to keep pace with life and this what I have done with my children."

With regard to using beating in the family, Salma's father said: " I don't use beating with my children, and if I find some lack in their homework I discuss with them about the reasons for this and then I and my children try to find suitable solution to this problem together. And thank God this way is successful."

Salma's mother added: " Beating is not a suitable way for treating children. Through my contact with my neighbors I knew that some parents beat their children as they think this is suitable but unfortunately this doesn't bring about any benefit, and what happens is the opposite; beating produces a negative reaction on their children's performance."

With regard to whether Salma's parents show their happiness to Salma when she obtains high marks in exams, Salma said: " My father and my mother are not only happy when I get high marks in the exam, but they also tell my brothers and sometimes my relatives about my performance. Also, my father praises me to express his happiness, for example, "You have given me reason to hold my head up in front of my friends" which make me feel happy and motivates me to achieve more."

Salma's father said: " Salma's mother and I always show our happiness to our children when they perform well at school. We express our happiness by having a cake to celebrate this occasion with all the family to show them all our happiness of their performance."

As regards Salma's father indicated: " I always reward Salma in order to encourage her to perform well". Salma's mother added: " We always reward Salma when she gets high marks according to our ability this is in order to encourage her. The older children always share in buying presents for the younger ones. Also, we give our children the freedom to choose the reward".

In addition, Salma's mother indicated that she gives Salma the freedom to choose her future career as she said: " I always discuss with my children their future career and give them the freedom to choose what they want to be in the future. For example, Salma wants to be a doctor in the future and I encourage her to do that and remind her if I find anything wrong with her performance. This is in order to motivate her to increase her performance and so to satisfy her own dream, and my dream, to become a doctor".

Also, Salma's father indicated: " I want Salma and all my children to satisfy my dream that is to attain a high level of education (Ph.D). This dream is the one that I couldn't satisfy when I was young because of social circumstances that prevented me from doing so. After my father died I had to leave school, although I liked it, and I had to work to support my family, and then I got married and became occupied with my own children. So I always try the impossible which is to satisfy my children's needs as much as I can and according to my financial situation. I do this in order to make them feel comfortable and then they might try to satisfy my dream, which is to obtain a high level of education and to get high level career. My own love of study and education made me think about encouraging my wife to enrol in the Illiteracy Elimination Center [ an institution to teach adults] to benefit herself and her children. Education is important for every person". He added: " I am sure that Salma will satisfy my own and her dream to study hard and become a doctor".

At the same time Salma added: " I wish to study to a high level and to become a doctor and to get my Ph.D in medicine". Also she added: " My mother and my father play a major role in my ambition to pursue higher study; they encourage me to perform. They tell me that success and superiority have a delicious taste and the only one who can taste it are those who deserve it and work for it. Also, my father always says to me and to my brothers that he exists in this life to provide us with all that we want, and he asks us not to be hesitant in asking him for help in any difficulties we may face in our study. He says that what he exactly wants from us is that we work hard to satisfy his dream of us. Salma indicated that she feels happy with her mother and father as she said: " Although my parents are not rich, but they try as much as they can to give me and my brothers and sisters all that we need for our interests and they bend over backwards to make us feel happy".

### **8.2.3.3 Parents Supervision Inside and Outside The Home**

Salma's father indicated that it is important to him that Salma obtains high marks. As he said: " Whenever I find out whether Salma's marks are high or low, I usually discuss with her the reasons for that.". Salma added: " It is important for my father that I get high marks in exams. He encourages me to work hard in order to be successful. Also he discusses my marks with me and the reasons for any low marks. He always asks about my marks even in the car on our way home, back from school."

Regarding homework and the role of Salma's family in it, Salma's father indicated:

" There is a lot of confidence between me and Salma, but still I always ask her about her homework in order to be sure of her and to help her as much as I can when she needs it. If I can't help I advise her to ask her older brothers or sisters to help her, and I try to bring home the references that may help her from the Public Library. Also, I always help her to organise her homework copybook by adding some clarifying pictures that I buy and draw for her."

The researcher noticed from Salma's copybook that her homework was well organised and there were many clarifying pictures for each lesson. For example, for a lesson of the digestive system of the human being, there was a picture enclosed with the homework. Salma said: " My father spends more than one hour with me and my brothers and sisters to help us do homework. He also encourages us by saying things like ` Gawakom Allah ` [ a traditional phrase meaning `May God help you and give you a power to do everything you want`]. He also tell us what he has learned by heart from the Quran or he even helps us to stick in some pictures or to draw some clarifying figures in the homework. My mother helps too. When my father and my mother ask about my homework, this makes me feel happy."

One of Salma's teacher indicated that Salma's family plays a role in helping her to organise her homework and as a result of this Salma obtained a reward for the best

copybook in the school. Salma's mother said: " Although I don't have a high education, I always try to encourage competition between my children, for example I say to Fawzi that Adnan is better than you at multiplying the 5 times table which motivates him to say the 5 times table in front of Adnan in order to prove to him that he is able to do it too. So in this way I make sure that my children are doing their homework well". Salma's father added: " At the weekend I always ask Salma's older brothers and sisters to review with her all that she learned during the week, and this takes place under my supervision. Also, I ask her to review with her young brothers what they did during the week which creates a climate of competition between them.". Salma supported what her parents said by saying: " My father and my mother are the people who most encourage and help us to solve our school and own personal problems".

With regard to organising the children's time in the home, Salma indicated: " My mother and my father are strict about how I organise my time. They advise me to make a timetable with their help to organise my time, and so I can give every aspect the right amount of interest. In my timetable there is a time for bed, another for playing and another for doing homework". Salma's mother indicated: " My children usually go to bed at 9 o'clock in order to get enough sleep".

With regard to choosing Salma's friends Salma said: " I always choose my friends from successful students or those who are at the same level of achievement as my own in order to benefit from their experience and to let them benefit from mine. Also, my parents always give me the freedom to choose my friends because they trust my choice, but they do also supervise my choice. For example, my mother always invites my friends to my home in order to get to know them and their parents closely. Also, my father always tells me that he wants to know my friends and to hear about how they encourage and help me and not just about our playing with each other".



Salma's father said : " I give Salma the freedom to choose her friends because I am confident of her, but at the same time I supervise her choice indirectly. I always try to know something about Salma's friends to make sure that there are no problems which may affect her". Khalda, a friend of Salma indicated that the friendship between her and Salma has existed for a long time, since kindergarten. Although they do not live in the same area the relationship between them is strong ( Khalda is lives in an upper class area). Khalda said: "my father knows Salma's father very well. He always praises him and says that he is fighter and that he is good educator, so my father allows me to visit Salma at her home". Khalda added that during their visits to each other she and Salma do homework together, and they exchange scientific magazines, which is the preferred hobby of each of them. Salma noted that she has many other hobbies like music and sport, but the one she like most is reading scientific magazines which she thinks add a lot of information to her knowledge. She said : " My father always agrees with my hobbies and he encourages me to read additional books ( not study books ) and magazines. This encouragement makes me like my hobby more. Although my father didn't complete his education he always tries to read everything and he encourages me and my brothers and sisters to read too. So we all like reading and because of that everyone has a small library in his/her own room besides the main library in the living room."

#### **8.2.3.4 The Home Atmosphere and Environment :**

Salma's house is a city council house ( for low salary). Its area is about 300 m. It contains two floors: The first floor consists of one living room and one bedroom for the parents, it contains also a kitchen and one bathroom. The second floor consists of three bedrooms and one bathroom. Besides these rooms there are also three bedrooms and one bathroom which are built outside the house. Salma's father indicated that he built these rooms because of the increased number of his children and because he prefers everyone to have

their own room in order to perform better. He took an advance from the bank in order to build these rooms. His sons Mohammed and Saleh who work in a company helped him to cover this advance payment. Thus, Salma has her own room, which contains a bed, a cupboard, a library with different books and magazines, a table, a chair, sufficient light, and a cassette recorder that her father bought last year as a reward for her success. She listens to music while doing her homework in her room.

The household furniture seems to be old but is organised nicely. It was observed that the family re-uses different things, for example, they decorate empty cans and use them as a plant containers. Also, most of the libraries of their children's rooms are home-made.

There are also some coloured flowers made from newspapers which the children made and coloured by themselves in order to decorate their own rooms. Besides the main library in the living room, there is a small one in Mohammed's, Saleh's and Maryam's rooms. These libraries contain various cultural and scientific books, in addition to some video tapes of cultural programmes and cartoons and some weekly and monthly magazines like 'Al Arab' and 'Al Nahdah'.

Mohammed the old brother of Salma added that during the weekend he always teaches his brothers and sisters the computer because they like it and he gives them more information about the new programs. Salma's father said: " In fact I don't have enough education myself but in spite of that I always visit the library and ask whoever is responsible in the library to suggest anything new and useful for me and for my children, then I buy it or borrow it."

Regarding quietness, Salma's mother said: " There is enough quietness for Salma and her brothers in the house to do their homework". Salma's father added: " Quietness is important for doing homework and I always tell my young children to be quiet in order to let their old brothers and sisters do their homework comfortably".

It was observed that academic superiority in Salma's house is not only limited to Salma but also includes her older brother Mohammed, an electrical engineer who works in the Electric and Water Ministry. He was good at his studies and now he is studying for an MA in his major. Saleh another older brother has also been good at his study, he is a newly graduated doctor. Maryam has an MA in information technology and wants to complete her studies by taking a Ph.D with her husband who is doing his Ph.D in America. The other children, Ahmed, Adnan and Fawzi, are all high achievers at school. Regarding respect in the house Salma answered: " I receive respect from my mother and my father and also from all my brothers and sisters. Every one respects the others and helps each other if needed as our father has taught us." Salma's father added: " I always listen to my wife's opinion in everything and I think two opinions are better than one whether in solving children's school problems or in any other aspect in life".

#### **8.2.3.5 The Relationship And Communication Between Salma's Family And School**

The social specialist of Salma's school indicated that in spite of the low educational level of Salma's father he always visits the school to make sure of her performance in the school. He also asks to meet her teachers in order to hear their opinions about his daughter's progress and about her school problems if any exist. She added that the activity of Salma's mother in following her daughter's progress is clear . She visits the school on Parents' Day and on other days to ask about her daughter's progress. One of Salma's teachers indicated that there is a kind of cooperation on the part of Salma's father in school activities: he is a good painter and can draw animals on posters as a contribution to the school. Salma's father indicated that he feels easy about speaking with Salma's social specialist and teachers, Also he would like to know all of Salma's teachers and discuss with them and benefit from their experience. He always visits Salma and his other children's schools.

Salma's reports indicated that she has been clever since the primary stage. Her teacher added that there is a good relationship between Salma and her teachers, and the social specialist. Also, she added that Salma deals with her teachers and social specialist as if they were her sisters or friends. She does not find any difficulty in speaking with them because she has learned to be self-confident and to talk about anything she thinks is wrong. The teacher added that if Salma misunderstands anything in the lesson she always asks the teacher to give her further explanations or if she has low marks she discusses that with her teacher. Another one of Salma's teachers indicated that Salma participates in many activities in the school like the library, and science activities. Salma's father indicated that he felt at ease in speaking with Salma's social specialist and teachers. Also he like to know all Salma's teachers and discuss with them and benefit from their experience and he always visits Salma and his other children's schools.

#### **8.2.4 Discussion and Conclusion of Case No 2**

It was observed that the relationship between Salma and her family was strong and full of love, understanding and providing a suitable environment for high achievement. There were several factors which help to strengthen the relationship between them.

Firstly, Salma's parents listen to what she says about school in spite of their own low educational level. As Salma indicated: " My father and my mother always listen to what I say about schooling.....even though they don't know some scientific words that I sometimes use". Salma's parents are interested in listening to her, and in helping to find a channel of communication. Through this channel Salma's parents know easily everything she thinks about, whether school problems or anything else. This allows quick solutions for any problem to be found from the beginning and strengthens the relationship between them.

Secondly, Salma's family has always encouraged her self-confidence and independence since she was young; this has helped Salma to face her problems bravely. As a result, she studies hard and tries to improve her performance including reaching suitable solutions for every school problem she faces. In addition, her parents give her directions and advice whenever needed, which makes them even closer to each other.

Thirdly, Salma's parents discuss any underachieving with her. They try to find out the reasons for the problem, then they put forward a suitable solution for it. Moreover they never use beating as a means of dealing with failure. This give quick solutions to the problem and at the same time makes Salma feel that her parents are interested in her problems.

Fourthly, Salma's parents are happy when she gets high marks in exams and tell her so through praise and by creating a climate of happiness in the house which motivates not only Salma, but also her brothers and sisters: they are encouraged to work hard and to increase their performance in order to see their parents happy all the time. This makes them cooperate with each other.

Fifthly, Salma's family uses rewards when Salma performs well and they give her the freedom to choose the reward she wants. This is in spite of their low economic level; they think that reward has a role in encouraging a student to work hard. Also, Salma's brother and sisters share in the reward which reflects the cooperation between the family members.

Sixthly, Salma's parents give her the freedom to choose the future career she wants and encourage her to get high marks creating a combined effort between them to realise this wish.

Seventhly, Salma's parents give interest, care and love to her, as Salma explained:

" Although my parents are poor they always do their best to give me everything I need in the way of interest, love and care to make me feel happy."

All these factors help to create a suitable and interactive environment for Salma to help her achieve a high level of performance. At the same time they strengthen the relationship between Salma and her parents.

However a further question remains regarding Salma's parents level of ambition and expectations for her and the effect of this on Salma's performance. It was observed that Salma's father's ambition for her was high. This comes from his own ambition to have a high level of education which his social circumstances prevented him from realising. As a result, he does his best to ensure that dream for his children: as he indicated: "...I always do my best to give my children all that they need, according to my financial situation, in order to make them feel comfortable and to realise my dream of them attaining a high qualification and a high level job". The high ambition of Salma's father includes not only what his children need in order to achieve a high level of education, but also includes his behaviour and ideas about the role of education for his wife: he asked her to finish her education by enrolling in a center for non-educated people. This he felt would benefit her children if needed. It seems that there is an agreement between the high ambition of Salma's father and his high expectations of her: he hopes she will obtain a Ph.D in medicine, as he indicated: "I am sure that Salma will realise my and her dream to get a high level of education". At the same time there is also an agreement between Salma's ambition and her father's ambition, as she indicated: "I always wish to get a good education and to get a Ph.D in medicine and become a doctor". Also, she indicated the role of her father in encouraging and motivating her to work hard and to achieve the best she can.

Regarding family supervision inside and outside the house, there is a clear interest of Salma's family in providing some activities and experiences for their children.

Firstly, all the family is interested in and shares in trying to realise success.

Secondly, Salma's low marks and the reasons for these are always discussed.

Thirdly, Salma's parents ask her daily about homework, as Salma's father indicated: "...to try to satisfy Salma and to solve any problems if needed and to give help as much as I can and support her by praising her efforts and work".

Fourthly, the parents create an educational and highly motivated climate for children, in spite of their own low educational level. They encourage the children to achieve their best.

Fifthly, they ensure enough time is spent with Salma on her homework. Although Salma's father does not have a high education, he always spends enough time with Salma by making her learn the Quran by heart or by giving her stimulating information.

Sixthly, the family helps to organise a schedule for Salma and gives every aspect its right amount of time.

Seventhly, the parents give Salma the freedom to choose her friends within the confines of indirect supervision. They make sure they know her friends' backgrounds and make sure that there are no problems inside those environments.

Eighthly, the parents show interest in Salma's hobby and encourage her to follow it. As Salma indicated: "My parents and my brothers and sisters encourage me to pursue my hobby which is reading general books.

It seems that all these points directly or indirectly help to find a suitable level of supervision for Salma, and then in turn help her to realise a high level of achievement.

It was observed that Salma's home environment was conducive to high achievement. In spite of the low social and economic situation of the family, they try to provide for their children the following:

1. A main library in the living room and small ones in the children's room.

2. Scientific magazines, cultural books, monthly magazines, and some scientific tapes which Salma's father borrows because they are expensive.
3. Quietness inside the house and a suitable place for doing homework.
4. Respect and cooperation between the family members. For example, Mohammed the older brother of Salma always trains his younger brothers and sisters how to use the computer.
5. Sharing between the mother and the father in all things, whether big or small, with regard to the family.
6. The high achievement of Salma's siblings and friends.

All these factors in Salma's house help to create a suitable environment for high achievement.

In conclusion, Salma's home environment, which as described includes cooperation, love between the family, ambition, high expectations, and suitable environmental factors for high achievement has a role in creating a channel between Salma and her family. In spite of the low educational and occupational level of Salma's parents, they do their best to give Salma everything she needs for high achievement. This is represented by Salma's father contributing to draw pictures for Salma's school, and by discussing with Salma's teachers and the social specialist ways of helping Salma in school. Her mother also participates in this way. It was observed that Salma's father's involvement with the school has a role in removing barriers between him and the school thus facilitating benefits from school experience. He also benefits from Salma's teachers' and social specialists' experience during discussion with them about ways for Salma to improve, which Salma indirectly benefits from.

It was observed that Salma's parents encourage her to discuss with her teachers anything she does not understand and this helps Salma to be self-confident and to ask about any difficulty she may face. This helps to create a climate of understanding between Salma



and her teachers and the social specialist which helps her to reach a high level of achievement.

In general, it was observed that the high ambition and expectations of Salma's father has a major role to play, or even may be considered as the main stimulus for the home environment. This stimulus facilitates all the circumstances, relationships, behaviour and provision of needs to create an environment conducive to high achievement for Salma; all of this is in spite of the low socio-economic situation of Salma's family.

### **8.3 The Family Life of Low Achievement Pupils:**

#### **8.3.1 Case No 3 ( Salman: Low Achievement)**

##### **8.3.1.1 Personal information**

Salman is the eighth child of eleven children. He is fourteen years and eight months old. He is hesitant when he speaks. At the beginning of his interview with the researcher, he seemed afraid, but after a while he seemed to feel better when the researcher tried to make him more comfortable by telling him that the information given would be secret and nobody would know about it ( Salman was afraid that his father would find out what he said). The researcher told Salman that his name would not be written down, and after that Salman felt free to speak. Salman looked untidy, his hair was not brushed well, and his clothes were not clean and were untidy. His clothing looked old and had been used for a long time. He used slippers instead of shoes in spite of the cold weather. The slippers were full of dust indicating that he walks everywhere.

Salman's father is fifty three years old; he is a doorkeeper. He always seems busy as he described himself. He can read and write but he does not have a certificate from school. Salman's mother is forty-five years old, she is illiterate. His siblings are: Ahmed, twenty-seven years old; Mohammed, twenty-five years old; Maryam, twenty-four years old; Shamma, twenty-three years old; Motlaq, sixteen years old; Salem, twelve years old;

Khaled, nine years old; Faleh, six years old; Sarah, four years old; and Ali, two years old. The family income is 670 KD which indicates that the family income is in the range from less than average to low.

#### **8.3.1.2 The Relationship between Parents and Children:**

The researcher faced a lot of difficulties in gaining this information. The parents tried to avoid an interview, and the researcher had to get in touch with them many times by telephone to finally carry out the interview with Salman's father. As Salman's mother indicated, Salman's father is rarely at home. After contacting Salman's father, it seemed that he was trying to avoid answering questions and was wondering what this interview was about, thinking that it perhaps was for the census? Why was this interview being done for him especially? What was the benefit from the information that he was going to give? The researcher tried to indicate to Salman's father that this research was just field research which could indirectly help to improve the educational situation in the country by acknowledging general information about the student and his parents. He asked the parents to give correct information in order to serve the country honestly. He added that this information would be secret and would be used only in this research, also that the names would be changed. He added that Salman's father was chosen randomly. The researcher told Salman's father that this research was not limited to him but there were some other families who had helped with this research. One of those families was Salman's father's neighbours, and the researcher gave the neighbour's telephone number to him. (This family was Hala's family). After Salman's father telephoned Hala's father and spoke with him about this research he felt more comfortable and accepted the interview, but he said that Salman's mother was not allowed to attend the interview because this did not conform to their social traditions, besides he said she was illiterate. It was observed that there was no sense of commitment in giving the appointment. The

father changed the appointment with the researcher twice, and he let the servant tell the researcher about that; he did not do it himself.

On the first visit the father welcomed the researcher and took him to the living room. The furniture in this room consisted of Masaned and Matareh ( a traditional spongy mattress which is cheap). It seemed dirty and untidy, also there were disarranged toys in the roomside which indicated that there was children playing in this room before the researcher came. On another side of the room there were some pillows and blankets.

When the researcher entered the house, he realised that three children entered the house a minute later. They were about two to six years old. They entered the living room: they look untidy, and their clothes were dirty. Salman's father said that they were his children and that he is married to two wives and that he has eleven children.

When the researcher asked Salman's father about whether he listens to what Salman said about schooling, he answered: " In fact I don't listen to what Salman says about schooling because I am always busy, in the morning at work or in the evening at Dewaniya with my friends". Salman's father indicated that he usually goes out of the house after lunch at about 2 o' clock and he comes back home at 1 o' clock am. Salman indicated: " My father is always out and he always tells me that I am not successful. He has never discussed anything with me and doesn't listen to what I say about schooling or about my homework or about my teachers in general". He added that he cannot ask his father or his mother for advice because they are always busy: his father is busy outside the home with his friends and his mother is busy with housework and with the small children. He mentioned that his parents do not play a role in encouraging him and advising him. Salman's father noted: " Salman doesn't ask me for advice because I can't help him because my educational level is low, besides his mother is illiterate, so how could we advise him or help him?".

Regarding whether the family uses beating as discipline, Salman's father indicated: " If you want the truth I always use beating with my children, especially when they get low marks in exams. I say to them you should study, but the ones who don't do it fail, so I beat them in order to make them improve their performance". Salman noted: " My father always beats me hard, beating me even on my face or on my body. He uses abusive words with me like "donkey". He doesn't care about knowing what our problems are and his only way to solve these problems is beating."

One of Salman's teachers indicated that the role of Salman's family in encouraging him to study is negative, and also that there is no cooperation between them and the school. He added that sometimes he sees some signs on Salman's face which indicate that some one has beaten him.

Regarding whether the family is happy when Salman gets high marks in exams, Salman answered: " In fact it is rare that my father is happy when I get high marks in exams. Sometimes I try to work hard in order to get high marks, but when I show him the marks he doesn't care about them". Salman's father noted: " In fact I am always busy trying to provide for my big family needs or I go with my friends to Dewaniya, so I have no time to stay with Salman and show him my happiness".

Regarding the reward, Salman said: " It is rare that my father rewards my study. Sometimes I try to work hard to improve myself but he has never rewarded me even in by saying good words. If he gave me anything and then I got low marks in exams he took it back". Salman's father indicated: " In fact it is rare that I reward Salman because life is difficult and therefore it needs a lot of expenses". He added that in addition to his children's expenses he has also other ones which is instalments to be paid on two cars: the first one is a Chevrolet which he uses for picnics, the other one is a James. As he described how he likes to change cars from time to time. He borrowed from his friends to pay for the cars. Salman's father added that there was no discussion between him and

Salman about Salman's future career but sometimes he tells Salman that he wants him to be an officer in the police or in the army, but Salman wants to be a soldier because he does not want to finish his study. Salman's father noted: " In my opinion I see that Salman is not successful in his study, so I prefer him to finish the intermediate stage then try to find any suitable job although I don't expect him to finish the intermediate stage". Salman said: " I want to finish the intermediate school and then find a job even if it is being a soldier". He added: " My father and my mother don't care about discussing with me my future career choice. He added: " Sometimes when I ask them to give me some money they refuse to give any to me and tell me that they have many expenses to assume, and they are anxious about me and say to me: " When you are going to find a job and help yourself?". Salman indicated that the relationship between him and his parents is not good as he described: " My father is always nervous, he doesn't come to an understanding with me and he doesn't give me what I want. My father doesn't care about finding out what my problems are but in the end he beats me as a way of discipline. My mother doesn't satisfy my needs even if what I want is cheap. For example, she prevents me building some cages for pigeons even if it is in my sparetime at the holidays". He added that the one who most likes listening to him and who is closer to himself is his uncle as he said: " My uncle encourages me to study and he brings me all that I want. He also gives me money and takes me with him to watch football matches."

#### **8.3.1.3 Parents' Supervision Inside and Outside the Home.**

Salman's father indicated: " It is not important for me that Salman has high marks, but I want him just to succeed even if he has low marks". Salman noted: " It is not important for my father that I get high marks in the exam, and sometimes he has told me that he doesn't want me to be an engineer or a doctor but that he just wants me to succeed and earn a lot of money. He rarely discuss anything with me about my homework".

With regard to the role of the family in supervising homework, Salman's father said:

" Sometimes I ask Salman to do his homework but because my educational level is low I can't help him. Besides that I am busy all the time, so I have no time to even look at his homework ". It was observed that Salman's copybook is not well organised and most of the homework is not done; his copybooks for mathematics and Arabic language have some teachers' comments on them saying he should take care of the copybook. Salman's maths teacher indicated that there is a clear lack of work, and there is no cooperation from Salman's family with the school. He added that although he writes down some comments on Salman's copybook for the parents, and tries with the social specialist to call Salman's parents to discuss with them about their son's homework copybook and low achievement, the father has not visited the school until now. Salman's Arabic teacher indicated that Salman is a low achiever in Arabic language. He encourages him to read stories and visit the school library, but he realised that Salman does not care about reading. Salman indicated: " My father and my mother don't help me to do my homework because of their low education and their being busy with other things".

Regarding organising the time of the children inside the house, Salman said: " In fact when I come back from school I get my lunch, then I go out with my friends playing football or going to the shop and talking about general things. I come back home at eight or nine o' clock p.m. and in the holidays I come back at twelve o' clock p.m." When the researcher asked Salman about whether his parents were satisfied with his coming home late he said: " In fact they are not satisfied with that but at the same time they don't care about it so I go to bed everyday at ten o' clock p.m. and in the holidays at one o' clock am". Regarding homework there is no specific time for doing it: sometimes he does it after coming back from playing and other times he does it in the morning of the next day. He explained: " My family don't care about whether I do my homework before or after play, and my father's business is a barrier which prevents him from following my

homework". Salman's father indicated: " I don't care about whether Salman does his homework before or after playing. The only important thing I think about is that Salman succeeds or earns a lot of money".

With regard to choosing Salman's friends, Salman indicated: " Most of my friends are of the same area and of the same educational level as myself, that is, they are not successful because I feel that successful students always make fun of me. He added: " My father doesn't supervise my friends' and he does not even know them". Salman's father indicated: " In fact I don't know Salman's friends and I think that this is not important for me". A friend of Salman whose name is Fahad indicated that they have been friends for two years when they were in the same class of second year in the intermediate school. They both failed that year, and so they become closer to each other. Fahad added that Salman's parents treat Salman badly, and that Salman always tells him that his parents do not like him and beat him. He added that he and Salman spend their time sitting in the shop smoking cigarettes or playing cards or going to the center. He also indicated that his parents do not know his friends.

Salman said that he does not have any specific hobbies but he feels happy when he goes out with his friends, and if he stays at home he just watches police films and football matches on the TV. He added: " In fact my father and my mother don't encourage me to read external books".

#### **8.3.1.4 The Home Atmosphere And Environment**

Salman's house is governmental housing (low income). The house area is 300 mm. It has two floors. The first floor contains a living room which at the same time is used as a bedroom for Salman and his grandmother and two of his brothers. Also it has a bedroom for the father and the first wife, and a bathroom. The second floor contains three bedrooms and one bathroom, one bedroom for the other wife and the two other bedrooms

are for six of Salman's brothers. Also there are two rooms and a kitchen built outside the house, one bedroom is for the three remaining children and one is used for storage. It was observed that Salman's bedroom is the same as the livingroom where the interview was carried out and which his two brothers and grandmother also share. There were no beds in this room just some mattresses placed on the floor, a TV and a video. The house furniture seemed to be old and cheap which probably came from the Friday Market ( a market which only opens on Friday and sells furniture at low prices and of low quality). In general, the house was not clean. Regarding the existence of cultural possibilities there was a video player and some tapes of police films and some football matches. Also there was a daily newspaper: as Salman's father indicated: " Everyday I bring the newspaper home to read the news that concerns with me like salary increases or any other such things". Regarding the existence of a library, there is no library in the house nor any cultural magazines nor computer. Salman's father added: " In fact there is no suitable place nor enough quietness for Salman to do his homework. This is due to our socio-economic circumstances and big family, but what can we do?". Salman said: " There is no suitable place, not enough quietness for me to do my homework because of the big family I have, and there is no place for me to put my books". When the researcher asked Salman's father if he encouraged Salman to read general books, he answered with astonishment: " Do general books benefit the person?" Then he continued: " I think reading non-school books may divert the student from studying, so I don't encourage my children to do that".

Regarding Salman's siblings, he has an older brother, called Ahmed, who is a policeman in the Home Office. Ahmed did not finish secondary school; he left school after finishing intermediate level. Mohammed is the second brother he is not working; he left school after finishing intermediate school. Maryam, the third child also left school after finishing intermediate school and now she spends her time sitting in the house. Shamma



only finished the first year of secondary school and she now works as a writer in the Public Health Ministry. Motlaq has the intermediate certificate and he is a soldier in the army. Salem who is in the first stage in intermediate school is a low achiever: he failed the third year of primary school. Khaled is in the second year of primary school; he is repeating this year again and he is a low achiever, especially in mathematics and science. Falah is in the first year of primary school and he is a little better than his brothers with regards to achievement.

When Salman's was asked about whether he receives respect in the house he answered:

" In fact, it is rare that I receive respect in the house. The relationship between me and my father and my brothers is not good. There are always arguments between us.

Sometimes they show me respect but that is when they need me to help them or when they want something from me ". Salman's father indicated: " In fact, I don't listen to my wife's opinions or to my oldest sons'. I don't let anyone share with me in decision-making even if it concerns my children's problems. My opinion is the right one according to my experience".

#### **8.3.1.5 Relationships And Communications between Family and School:**

The social specialist of Salman's school indicated it is rare that Salman's family visits the school. Although they send many letters and phone Salman's family asking them to visit the school and discuss their son's work, no one comes and shares anything with the school. The social specialist added that this is not strange for Salman's family because this was the same with Salman's brothers before, when the social specialist sent letters regarding Motlaq and Saslem's progress asking the family to visit the school. As he said: " a long time ago about three years ago, Salman's father visited the school when there was a big problem with Salman who had tried to beat up one of the students in the class and had injured his face. The role of Salman's father in solving this problem was negative

and all that he did was to beat Salman in front of all the teachers, and when we tried to tell him that this was wrong he didn't pay any attention to us".

One of Salman's teacher indicated that the cooperation between Salman's family and him is nearly entirely absent. Although he tried to write some comments on Salman's copybook for them to see he never received any response from them. The teacher said that the parents do not help Salman to do his homework and they do not try to communicate with the teachers to discuss their child's low achievement.

School reports indicated that Salman has been a low achiever since primary school and he is getting worse year after year ever since the curriculum began to get difficult.

Salman indicated that he finds it difficult to speak with the teachers or social specialist.

He added that he does not try to contact the teachers because as he said: " I am lazy and I feel embarrassed to speak with them". Salman's father also noted that it is difficult for him to speak with Salman's teachers or the social specialist because he feels too shy to discuss anything about his son because his son is lazy and because of his own low educational level, and this is one of the reasons he used to justify not visiting school.

Another teacher of Salman's indicated that Salman does not participate in any extra activities in school; he spends his activity time playing with his friends or playing football.

### **8.3.2 Discussion and Conclusion Case of No 3**

It was observed that the relationship between Salman and his family is weak: there is no connection between them and this creates an unsuitable environment for Salman to become a high achiever. There was several factors which weaken their relationship. Firstly, the lack of listening to him on behalf of the parents. This is due to their pre-occupation with their own matters the father in his work or with his friends in the Dewaniya and the mother with her housework and small children. This makes Salman

feel that he is not important for his parents and this gives him a negative attitude making him a low achiever.

Secondly: Salman's father's use of beating as a means of discipline, and the use of abusive words, like " you are a donkey", weaken Salman's self-confidence and weaken the relationship between him and his father. Again this helps to make him into a low achiever. He does not even think that he could attain high achievement, as he said about his father: " He doesn't care about finding out what our problems are but in the end he beats us as a way of discipline".

Thirdly, Salman's father never shows that he is happy when his son does get high marks in exams. This frustrates Salman, as he said: " Sometimes I try to study and get high marks but when I show my father my high marks he doesn't care about me and doesn't say anything to me".

Fourthly, There are no rewards for Salman when he gets high marks and if ever he did, his parents would take it back once he got bad results.

Fifthly, There is no discussion between Salman and his father about his future career and there is no encouragement or even agreement of his father to this future career.

Sixthly, his father does not try to satisfy Salman's needs, as Salman said describing his father: " He is always nervous and doesn't try to come to an understanding with me and he doesn't give me what I want" and also about his mother:" she doesn't satisfy my needs even if what I need is cheap..."

The existence of all these factors mentioned above in Salman's life weaken the relationship between him and his family. This creates an unmotivated environment for Salman to perform and this in turn leads to low achievement.

Another point for consideration is Salman's father's ambitions and expectations of Salman and the effect of that on Salman's achievement. It was observed that Salman's

father's educational and occupational ambition level for Salman was weak. The father noted that Salman is not successful at school, she wants him to finish the intermediate school, and work in any job at all. His expectation level was even less than his ambition level, as he himself indicated; he does not expect Salman to finish intermediate school. At the same time there is an agreement between Salman's father's weak ambition for him and Salman's own ambition. As Salman said: " In fact, I want to finish intermediate school and work in any job", which means that the lack of encouragement from Salman's father and his lack of ambition has probably affected Salman's own ambition making Salman's ambition fall to the same level of his father. Also it was observed that the way that Salman's father and mother treat their son and their inability to satisfy his needs, especially when he asks them for money (as he said: " They scream at me and ask me when I'm going to find a job and help myself") are likely to weaken his ambition level and weaken his motivation to perform. As a result, he only thinks about how he can find money to satisfy his needs and does not think about getting a high level of achievement and high level job.

Regarding supervising Salman inside and outside the home it was observed that his parents' supervision of him was weak. This has a role in weakening Salman's achievement.

Firstly, Salman's father is not interested whether Salman has high marks or not. He only wants him to earn money. As Salman said about his father : " My father said to me that he doesn't want me to be a doctor or engineer, he wants me just to earn money". This weakens the motivation of Salman to attain a high level of achievement.

Secondly, in general, there is no discussion about study and homework inside the home.

Thirdly, asking about homework is not an everyday event and if it occurs at all, it is just a verbal inquiry, there is no request to see the homework copybook.

Fourthly, the parents do not have enough time to spend on Salman's homework. This is because of the father's pre-occupations outside the home and the mother pre-occupation with her small children. It is also because their own low educational level does not help them to see the value of education.

Fifthly, There is no motivating climate inside the home.

Sixthly, There is no organisation of Salman's time. He goes outside the home, he plays, watches TV, does homework and goes to bed as he wants.

Seventhly, Salman has the freedom to choose his friends without any parental interest or supervision. As Salman's father indicated: " I think this is not important to me"

Eighthly, There is no encouragement given to Salman to read any extra books.

All of these points weaken the relationship between him and his family and also create an unsuitable environment for him in which to study and achieve.

Another significant factor involved in Salman's low achievement is Salman's family low socio-economic level. The effects of this can be seen in the following points.

Firstly, there is a lack of cultural stimulation inside the house. There is nothing like a library, extra books for the children, or tapes of educational programmes.

Secondly, there is a lack of quietness due to the large family size. As Salman indicated: "There is not enough quietness in the house, especially with my small brothers". Also there is no suitable place for Salman to do his homework or even to sleep because the living room is the same room that Salman does his homework in and sleeps in. He also has to share this space with his grandmother and two of his brothers. In this room there is no bed or cupboard because this is a place for the whole family to gather in.

Thirdly, there is a lack of respect towards Salman from his family.

Fourthly, decision making for all family matters and even Salman's problems is limited to Salman's father only; his wife is not allowed to share in this. His opinion, as he said is: "What I see is right".

Fifthly, the low achievement level of Salman's siblings and friends mean that Salman lives in an unmotivated environment, which is far from any idea of high achievement either inside or outside the home.

These points all together in Salman's family weaken the connection between the family members. Also Salman's family climate does not encourage interaction or ambition, creating a frustrating environment for Salman.

The weak relationship between Salman and his family and the lack of encouragement from his father are reflected in the relationship between the family and school. The family is divided and has been for some time. As the social specialist indicated that rupture of relations existed with Salman's older brothers. Although the school contacts the family and sends many letters to them to come, the family never responds.

It was clear that there are many barriers that prevent Salman's father from contacting the school such as his low educational level and his shame at speaking with the social specialist and teachers, because his son is lazy. This lack of connection between the family and the school affects directly and indirectly the ability to find suitable solutions to Salman's school problems. Problems are accumulating and are becoming more difficult to solve. As Salman's school reports indicated, his low achievement is increasing year after year.

There is a similarity between Salman's father's feelings when speaking with teachers and Salman's feelings. Salman feels ashamed to speak with his teachers. He feels no self-confidence when speaking with them, which may be due to the fact that his father does not have any confidence in him. This affects Salman in the class and makes him unable to discuss or ask any questions about anything which he does not understand. This then makes it even more difficult for him to achieve.

In general, it was observed that the low socio-economic level of Salman's family has an important effect in Salman's house. Also, it has a clear effect on the relationships between the family members and Salman. These points as well as the supervision level inside and outside the home, and the home environment itself lead to an unmotivated environment for Salman, meaning that is difficult for him to be a high achiever.

### **8.3.3 Case Study No 4: (Yasmene: Low Achievement)**

#### **8.3.3.1 Personal Information**

Yasmene is fourteen years and four months old. She is the third in her family. She is shy and hesitant. At the beginning of the interview the researcher tried to explain to her the purpose of the research. Then he broke the ice between them by letting her ask the questions she wanted to ask. Then he told her that everything she said would be secret and that it would be used only for research. After that Yasmene found it easier to speak. It was observed that Yasmene's clothes were of high quality although they were the formal school colour which is white and gray. They looked clean and neat. Yasmene's father is fifty six years old, he has worked in a senior position as an under secretary of state for the last four years. He has a BA and an MA from the United States. He speaks quickly and use short sentences when answering questions. Yasmene's mother is fifty years old, she has a BA in translation from the United States. She works in a ministry in a senior position. The family income is 2500 KD which indicates that the family income of this family is high. Yasmene has one sister and one brother; her sister's name is Sarah and she is the older one; she is twenty five years old. Yasmene's brother's name is Mohammed and he is twenty four years old.

### **8.3.3.2 The Relationship between the Parents and their Children and Discipline:**

The researcher faced a lot of problems in convincing Yasmene's family to carry out the interview and also in making an appointment with them due to Yasmene's father's busy schedule. Although he made an appointment with the researcher five times he did not keep these appointments. However, the sixth time, which fell on a holiday, the first interview was done with the father and the mother. The second interview was carried out with the mother only because the father could not attend.

On Friday about four o'clock p.m. ( Friday is the weekend in Kuwait) Yasmene's mother welcomed the researcher and took him to the main reception room. The mother told the researcher that Yasmene's father was just coming home from work because something important at work caused him to go to work on the holiday. Five minutes later, the father came in and participated in the interview. It was observed that the furniture in this room was disorganised and there were some cups on the table. Yasmene's mother apologised for that and told the researcher that she is always busy organising dinner parties for her husband's guests, due to the nature of his job. This means that the room is engaged and cannot be perfect all the time. She added that the reason for the state of the room this time was because two hours ago she had some visitors to lunch.

When the researcher asked Yasmene's parents whether they listen to what Yasmene said about schooling, Yasmene's father answered: " In fact, my permanent tight schedule in my work prevents me from listening to Yasmene". He added that the nature of his job required him to be present at meetings which caused him to be outside the house frequently. Also he added that he goes home to rest. Yasmene's mother indicated:

" Sometimes I listen to her if I am not busy outside the home in my work or visiting my friends". Yasmene noted: " My father does not listen to what I am saying about schooling because he is always busy outside the house and my mother rarely listens to me due to her appointments". She added: " In fact, I can't ask my parents' advice because they are



always busy, my father in his work and my mother in her work also and in her visits outside the house". She continued: " When I ask my father to help me in anything difficult he says that he doesn't know the answer even though he has an MA." Yasmene's father explained: " In fact, Yasmene rarely asks me and her mother to advise her because we are always busy, but maybe she asks her sister or brother". He added " In fact, I come home from work very tired. I take a rest and go to sleep for about one hour, then I read newspapers and then go back again to work in evening; then I come back home late". With regard to using beating as discipline, Yasmene's father said: " I don't use beating with my children" but Yasmene's mother said: " In fact, I beat Yasmene if it is necessary especially when she has low marks in school and sometimes I forbid her from doing something, although I don't do this with her brother and sister".

One day, one of Yasmene's teachers realised that Yasmene was crying and when she asked her about the reason Yasmene answered that her mother had beaten her because she failed in a subject. Yasmene's mother indicated: " In fact, Yasmene's father does not punish her or even ask her about her low results". Yasmene said: " My father doesn't beat me when I get low marks in exams but sometimes he says: You must study hard and get better marks. But he doesn't show me how I can get high marks. With regard to my mother, she is nervous and sometimes she beats me when I have low marks".

Regarding the parents' pleasure when Yasmene gets high marks, Yasmene said: " In fact, my father doesn't show me that he is happy if I improve my marks. For example, one time I got eight out of ten in Arabic Language but he didn't show me that he was happy about that. He just said to me "why you didn't get the full marks". And sometimes he says "OK", so he doesn't encourage me to improve myself. Sometimes my mother shows me that she is happy when I get high marks in the exam". Yasmene's father explained: " In fact, my pre-occupation with my work may be a reason for my not showing interest in Yasmene. I have no time to see her. Also, she does not have enough high marks to make me feel

happy". Yasmene's mother indicated: " I let Yasmene see that I am happy when she gets high marks in the exams".

Regarding rewards, Yasmene indicated: " My father doesn't reward me when I improve myself because he wants me to get full marks, which I can't get". Yasmene's father said: " In fact, I buy Yasmene many expensive presents for different occasions but I don't reward her, because she doesn't get high enough marks to deserve a reward". Yasmene's mother said: " I get her everything she wants. For example, a high quality watch, and an expensive dresses but this is not exactly when she gets high marks. I do it for different occasions, which I think is enough to encourage her to improve herself".

Yasmene indicated that there is no discussion between her and her parents about her future career. She said her parents were not interested in knowing what their daughter wanted to be and they do not advise her what career is suitable for her. As she said: " Sometimes I've told my father that I want to be a journalist in a famous newspaper but he did not encourage me, he just says to me: " Before you think that you want to be a journalist you must improve your low achievement in school". Yasmene's father said: " In fact, I don't have enough time to discuss with or even to sit with my children, in fact in the past I have enough time to spend with my older children, but now according to my occupation in the new position; there is no time to Yasmene, so there is no dialogue between me and Yasmene". Yasmene's mother said: " Sometimes there is a dialogue between me and Yasmene about her future career. For example, sometimes she has said to me that she wants to be a doctor and I say to her but you are afraid of blood so how can you be a doctor?". Yasmene's father said: " In fact, I want Yasmene to finish her university studies like her sister Sarah but I don't think that she will do so because she is a low achiever and I think she will be satisfied with the Diploma". Yasmene indicated: " I will be satisfied with Diploma after finishing secondary school and then I want to be a teacher". Yasmene indicated that the relationship between her and her parents is not

good. Her father doesn't care about her problems and her mother is always nervous, she added that if she has major problems she always goes to her friend to get help in solving her problems.

#### **8.3.3.3 The Parents' Supervision Inside and Outside the Home:**

Yasmene's father explained : " What is important to me is that Yasmene earns good money and it is not important to me that she has high marks because I know that she is a low achiever". Yasmene said: " I don't know if it is important for my father that I have high marks because he is always busy in his work", She added: " Sometimes he says to me that he wants me to do my homework and succeed but never discusses anything or helps me to do my homework".

Regarding the homework and the role of the family in it, Yasmene's father said: " In fact, I don't ask about homework, I leave that to my wife". Yasmene's mother said: " Due to Yasmene's father pre-occupation in his work he is not interested in Yasmene's homework but in the past when he had less work he had time for helping Sarah and Mohammed.

Regarding my role, sometimes I try to ask her whether she did her homework or not but this does not happen every day because I am busy. Also I don't look at her homework or even specify a specific time she should work on it". Yasmene indicated: " My father and my mother don't spend even a few minutes with me on my homework".

It was observed from Yasmene's copybook that her homework was not complete. Also there was a note from the teacher saying that she should complete and organise her homework. In Yasmene's school the social specialist indicated that teachers do their best with Yasmene in order to encourage her to complete her homework, review her the lessons and improve her level, but Yasmene's family's participation was weak. As the social specialist indicated, Yasmene's father has never visited the school; he justified this by saying that he is always busy. Yasmene indicated: " The role of my parents in helping

me doing my homework is weak because they are busy. Also their encouragement and direction to me is limited to just speaking, they do not do anything else to help me."

Regarding organising time inside the home, Yasmene said: " After coming back from school I usually have my lunch then I spend most of the time watching the TV programmes that I like". With regard to doing homework Yasmene said: " My parents don't care whether I do my homework before or after watching TV" Also, Yasmene's father indicated: " I don't care about when Yasmene does her homework, and what is important to me is that she does her homework at some time that she succeeds".

Yasmene added: " In fact my parents don't play a role in organising my time and I do my work as I see it is suitable for me.". Regarding bedtime, Yasmene indicated: " In fact there is no specific time to go to bed; sometimes I go to bed at 9 o'clock and sometimes at 10 o'clock according to the TV programmes".

With regard to choosing her friends Yasmene said: " Most of my friends are unsuccessful students. I don't like the successful ones because they don't like my low achievement".

She added: " My father and my mother don't care about choosing my friends because they are always busy". Yasmene's father said: " In fact I give Yasmene the freedom to choose her friends, and because of my and her mother's busy schedules we don't have time to find out who her friends are". Maiy, a friend of Yasmene, indicated that she had known Yasmene for a long time, she added that there are common qualities between them, such as, that they are of the same educational achievement level. She added also that most of the time they spend during together is watching TV and exchanging video tapes of English and Arabic films. Yasmene indicated: " I like painting and reading but the thing I like most is watching TV". She added also that her parents sometimes encourage her hobbies and sometimes not". Regarding reading extra books, Yasmene indicated: " My mother's encouragement to me in reading is not clear; sometimes she encourages me to

read but other times she prevents me from doing so. And my father does not encourage me at all". Yasmene's mother said: " I encourage her to read extra books but when I found out about her low achievement in school I prevent her from outside reading so as not to affect her achievement". Yasmen's father indicated: " I don't encourage her to read extra books because she is low achiever and I want her to read her school books in order to succeed".

#### **8.3.3.4 The Home Atmosphere and Environment:**

Yasmen's house is a villa of 750 square m. It contains two floors, the first one is used only for receptions and there is also an office for Yasmene's father. Also there is a kitchen and a bathroom for guests. The second floor consists of five bedrooms: one for Yasmene's parents, one for Sarah who is Yasmene's old sister, one for Mohammed who is Yasmene's brother, one for Yasmene, and one for Yasmene's aunt who lives with them with her four children because of some social circumstances. There is also one living room for the family and four bathrooms. In addition, there is a building outside the villa which consists of an external kitchen and one room for the cooker and the servant. Also the villa is surrounded by a beautiful garden.

Yasmene has a separate room, as stated above, which contains a bed, cupboard, table for books, and enough light. Also the room has lovely views of the garden. The furniture in the villa is of good quality and of light color; the lower floor which is special for receiving guests is particularly luxurious. Also there are some beautiful house plants. Regarding cultural stimulation, there is a video and a library consisting of a variety of video tapes of English and Arabic films. Also there are daily newspaper for Yasmene's father. Inside Yasmene's father's office, there is a big library consisting of a lot of cultural and scientific books. Yasmene indicated: " There are a lot of books in my house but most of them are inside my father's office and he does not allow us to read them because he

thinks that they are special for him". Yasmene's mother said: " There is a computer inside the house but because Yasmene does not use it we put it in the storage room. Also there are some magazines in Yasmene's father office and some in the storage room which were put in boxes after Yasmene's father has read them. Yasmene's mother indicated: " The four children who are the children of Yasmene's aunt disturb Yasmene and they always fight with her". Yasmene indicated: " Sometimes there is not enough quietness because my cousins disturb me, thus I usually go to the reception room in the lower floor to do my homework". Regarding Yasmene's siblings, Sarah, Yasmene's sister, graduated from Kuwait University. Mohammed her brother is a middle achiever who graduated from secondary school and now is studying in a college.

When Yasmene was asked whether she received respect in her home she indicated:" In fact I receive respect from all my family, but sometimes I feel that my mother does not respect me because she always beats me". Yasmene's father indicated: " In fact I leave solving the children's problems for my wife because I have no time for that". In a separate interview Yasmene's mother indicated: " In fact most of the time Yasmene's father is busy and he always leaves me to solve the children's problems, which causes me a lot of troubles in decision making".

#### **8.3.3.5 The Relationship and the Communication between the Family and the School:**

The social specialist of Yasmene's school indicated that Yasmene's family does not cooperate with the school: although the school has tried to call them to visit the school to discuss the reasons for their daughter's low achievement, Yasmene's father has not visited the school even once. However, Yasmene's mother sometimes visits the school. The social specialist added that in the time that she has been working in this school she realised that the family's interest was only in their daughter Sarah, Yasmene's old sister,

who was studying in the same school but this interest is not clearly shown towards their daughter Yasmene.

One of Yasmene's teachers indicated that Yasmene's family does not cooperate with her. In spite of the comments that the teacher puts in Yasmene's copybook for her parents, they never respond or give any reasons for this. Yasmene's father indicated: " In fact according to my permanent business I have no time to visit the school". Yasmene's mother said: " In fact I visit the school if there is something very necessary. And I think my visit is useless because the school always sends letters to the parents after the student has already received low marks". She added: " I find it easy to speak with Yasmene's teachers and social specialist. They are always astonished and make comparisons between how clever Sarah is and what a low achiever Yasmene is. I know that this is true but what can we do?". One of Yasmene's teachers who taught Sarah, Yasmene's sister, indicated that her parents were more cooperative with her. They always visited the school and asked about their daughter. Regarding relations at school, Yasmene indicated: " I find it difficult to speak with my teachers and the social specialist because I feel shy about being a low achiever. Yasmene's activity teacher indicated that Yasmene has many activities like painting and reading but her parents do not encourage her hobbies because they want her to improve her academic achievement first. School reports indicated that Yasmene has been low achiever since the beginning of intermediate school, but that she was high achiever in primary school.

#### **8.3.4 Discussion and Conclusion of Case No 4**

From the above it was observed that the relationship between Yasmene and her family was weak. This creates a weak interactive environment for high achievement. There are several factors that help to create this weak relationship.

Firstly, the lack of the parental listening due to the father's business in his work and the mother's work and visiting her friends.

Secondly, Yasmene's father shows no interest in her matters which creates barriers between them. As Yasmene's mother indicated: " Yasmene's father does not punish her and does not ask about her low achievement ". And as Yasmene said: " Most of the time he doesn't care about my marks, he just says `OK, OK` and that's all. So he does not encourage me...".

Thirdly, Yasmen's mother beats her and prevents her from doing things she likes. This leads to a negative reaction not only with regard to Yasmene's achievement but also with regard to the general relationship between her and her parents.

Fourthly, Yasmene's parents do not show her their happiness when she improves her achievement and gets high marks in exams. This makes Yasmene feel frustrated. As she said: " One time when I got 8 out of 10 in the exam and then showed my father, he did not show any care about me and said to me:" Why didn't you get full marks".

Fifthly, Yasmene's parents do not give her rewards when she improves her achievement. This is because Yasmene's parents think that rewards should be given just for the full mark, which Yasmene can not reach. Although Yasmene is given expensive presents from her parents, she is not rewarded for her simple improvements in school and this weakens her motivation to improve her performance.

Sixthly, Yasmene and her parents do not discuss her future career with her. And they do not encourage her to think about it. This became clear when Yasmene said: " Sometimes I have told my father that I want to be a journalist.....but he does not encourage me and said: " Before you think about what you want to be you had better improve your achievement in school." As Yasmene's mother said: " Sometimes Yasmene tells me that she want to be a doctor, and I say to her : " but you are afraid of blood so how are you going to be a doctor?". The lack of encouragement from Yasmene's parents to think about



her future career makes her feel that there are no aims in her life that she needs to increase her performance for. This weakens the interaction between Yasmene and her parents and weakens her motivation to attain a higher achievement.

Seventhly, Yasmene's parents do not satisfy their daughter's needs. As Yasmene said about her father: " He does not care about me or even try to find out what my problems are". Yasmene described her mother by saying: " Most of the times she is nervous of me". These comments indicated that Yasmene does not lack material needs but emotional ones which are: need for interaction, need for support, and need for encouragement from her family. And these do not exist in Yasmene's family for her.

All the above mentioned factors act in two ways: first, they weaken the relationship between Yasmene and her family, which in turn leads to the second, which is to weaken the motivating environment for Yasmene.

Furthermore, there is no agreement between Yasmene's father's ambition for her and his expectations for her. Although he wants Yasmene to finish university study, he only expects her to finish the diploma because of her low achievement. On the other hand, there is an agreement between Yasmene's father's expectation and Yasmene's ambition which is to finish the diploma ( two years after secondary stage ) and then to find any job. This indicates that Yasmene's father's expectations may have directly affected Yasmene's ambition and brought it to the same level. This then weakens Yasmene's motivation to study hard and attain high achievement and then to enrol in university and to complete her studies.

With regard to supervision inside and outside the home, there were several factors that indicate the weak supervision of Yasmene's parents: Firstly, Yasmene's father does not show interest in whether Yasmene obtains high marks or low ones in the exams. What is

important to him is that she succeeds. As he explained, this is because she is a low achiever. This then weakens Yasmene's motive to achieve.

Secondly, the father leaves the responsibility for seeing that Yasmene does her homework to his wife because he is always busy.

Thirdly, the mother just asks about Yasmene's homework. There was no discussion between them about it and there is no special time for doing it because of her own busy life.

Fourthly, the parents do not make sure that Yasmene spends enough time on her homework. Also they make no attempt to organise Yasmene's time for doing homework or for going to bed or for watching TV.

Fifthly, there is a weakness in motivation and interaction between the family and Yasmene.

Sixthly, there is a lack of supervision in Yasmene's choice of friends because her parents do not have enough time to see to it.

Seventhly, Yasmene's parents are hesitant in encouraging her to read extra books: sometimes they encourage her but other times they prevent her from doing so, which leads to an unbalanced attitude towards reading.

All these points help to weaken the motivational environment for Yasmene to study hard and to obtain high achievement.

It was clear from this study that Yasmene's home environment does not motivate her to attain high achievement. Although her family is of a high socio-economic level there are some factors that lead to an unmotivative environment for Yasmene. Firstly, the weakness of cultural motives specifically for children, like programmes and scientific magazines. If these do exist in the household they are not accessible to the children. In spite of the existence of a variety of cultural books in the house Yasmene is not allowed

to read them as she indicated that all the books are in her father's office, in his own library. Yasmene's mother indicated that most of the books are in Yasmene's father's library or are put in special boxes in storage after he has finished reading them.

Secondly, there is a lack of quietness when Yasmene does her homework which as Yasmene indicated is due to her cousin's disturbance. Although she has her own room to do her homework in she cannot do so because of her cousins. She therefore has to go downstairs to the reception room looking for the quietness to do her homework. This causes instability for Yasmene in doing her homework and in turn it leads to weakening her achievement.

Thirdly, the weakness of the respect Yasmene receives from her mother, especially when she beats her as she herself indicated. This affects indirectly Yasmene's achievement.

Fourthly, Yasmene's father does not cooperate in decision making or in solving Yasmene's school problems. He leaves the responsibility for that to his wife, which causes many troubles for her and makes her confused in decision making. This also affects indirectly Yasmene's achievement.

Fifthly, the failure of Yasmene's parents to create a good family environment. This weakens the interaction between Yasmene's siblings who are high achievers and Yasmene, thus failing to encourage her to obtain high achievement.

Sixthly, the weakness of the family supervision of Yasmene's friends. This results in Yasmene's choosing to make friends with others of low achievement who are at the same educational level and share her hobbies.

All these points help to weaken the motivating environment necessary for high achievement.

The relationship between Yasmene's family and school displays the same weakness in participating in decision-making and supervision. As the social specialist indicated, the relationship between the father and the school did not exist. Yasmene's mother rarely

visits the school and only does so if it is necessary. This weakens the cooperation between the home and the school and hinders the possibility of solving Yasmene's problem from the beginning, which allowed Yasmene low achievement to continue. Although Yasmene's mother finds it easy to speak to Yasmene's teachers and the social specialist, which may be due to her high educational level, she rarely visits the school because she feels shy when they compare Yasmene and Sarah her high achieving older daughter. She does not want to meet with the teachers because she does not want to talk about the reasons for this difference. Yasmene indicated that she finds it difficult to speak with her teachers and the social specialist. This may be due to the failure of Yasmene's to instil confidence in Yasmene. This lack of confidence makes her uncooperative and keeps her from asking questions and discussing things with them and then leads her to be a low achiever.

There is a relationship between the father becoming under-secretary (his career position) and Yasmene starting to be a low achiever. The father assumed this position four years ago a time when as school reports indicated Yasmene was good in the primary stage. It was later within the intermediate stage that she began to be a low achiever. When Yasmene's father attained his high post he became more responsible in his job and this caused him to have less time for controlling and supervising his family's environment and prevented him from cultivating the relationship between Yasmene and himself, especially in this stage which need more efforts on the part of her. As a result Yasmene's mother who was busy in her own high post got the additional major responsibility from the father to supervise the family. These responsibilities along with her visits and receiving guests created a kind of disconnection in the family and weakened the interaction between them all. This negatively affected Yasmene's achievement. Yasmene's teachers supported this observation of the change in the family by indicating that Yasmene's parents' previously visited the school and took an interest in their

daughter Sarah which helped her to have high achievement. However, this interest was lost, was no longer possible, with Yasmene due to the major responsibilities of her father and mother.

From the above it was clear that one of the negative effects of the parents' on-going lack of time was that they did not put any effort into motivating their children by exchanging information with their children and allowing them to benefit from each other experiences. This led to little contact between the family members and in turn led to a weak home environment.

#### **8.4 Conclusion:**

From analysing the different case studies it became clear that the results given presented a clearer picture than the results of the interviews by themselves. Also, these studies provided an inclusive picture of the situation of each case, supported with facts and documents related to school files, the teachers' and social specialists' observations, homework copybook, interviews with friends, interviews with the children themselves and interviews with the parents. Such detailed study was done in order to obtain more valid and reliable information. This gave an accurate picture of the children's reality inside the home. In addition, the case studies added another dimension which the interviews alone could not add. In the interviews only one parent's opinion was presented whereas in the case study both parents were presented (except Salman case). This then reflected more accurately the real home environment of the family, internal relationships and the dynamic nature inside the family and which enrich the dialogue between the researcher and the family. In addition, the use of case study provided more information about many aspects that allow us to ascertain the main difference between the cases. In addition, the use of case studies allowed more observations over longer time which

provided a more valid and real picture of the family situation. Finally the case study allowed the researcher more scope to investigate the possible variables. The case studies of high achieving children showed that they all shared certain similarities in internal activities, stability, cooperation between the mother and the father and cooperation between the parents and the children. This occurred in spite of their different socio-economic situations. With regard to Ammar's case, the high level of socio-economic factors and the education factor of the parents was an assistant factor that gave Ammar direct and indirect help, creating a climate of happiness, stability, cooperation between Ammar and his parents. Although Salma's family was lower in socio-economic status, the high ambitions and expectations, internal motivation and stability in her family were the factors that helped her to surmount the barriers of low educational and social level of her parents and gave her direct help.

The results of low achieving cases showed that they shared similarities in their internal situation and internal relationship in spite of their different socio-economic situations. In all of these cases the parents neglected the children by not spending much time with them and showing little interest in the children. In addition, there was little contact and cooperation between the mother and the father, which in Salman's case took on a form in which the father believed only in his own opinion and did not give the mother a chance to express her opinion. With regard to Yasmene's case the dependent state of the mother in all matters was the dominant style of that family. A further similarity between the two cases was the low motivating force given to the children which affected negatively on their achievement (Salman and Yasmene).

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **9.1 Introduction:**

The purpose of this present study was to examine in depth the relationship and influence, if any between cultural and socio-economic factors and the academic achievement of pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait. The findings and results of the study have been described in the preceding chapters. This chapter will now present the discussion and interpretation of the results.

#### **9.2 The Statistical Analysis**

The statistical results showed the possible effect of family factors on student's educational achievement. These influencing factors were the occupational level of the father, the educational level of the father, the educational level of the mother, family income and family size. However the role of the occupational level of the mother on the students' achievement was not apparent. In other side, the results proved that there was no significant relationship between the educational achievement of the students and the inter-school differences. It was seen from the results that children from smaller, more wealthy families in which the parents were well-educated and the father had a high-status occupation tended to perform better in intermediate school in Kuwait. By using simple correlation of the previously researched factors and then using the multiple regression test using stepwise, we found that the key variables factors are the father's occupation and father's education.

Considering the fact that in Kuwait the occupational level of the father is dependent on his educational level in which high jobs are related to high qualifications, we can say that the educational -cultural level of the father is the dominant factor in children's

achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait (see Figure 9.1). These results correspond to the conclusion drawn by Beasley (1980) who found that parental education is the most important factor in terms of pupil achievement; they are also confirmed by Eagle, Eva, (1989), in his research on post-secondary students' attainment, who confirmed the pervasive importance of parental education on students' achievement. The findings of both Holmes (1988) and Kellagham (1993), who studied the relationship between students' achievement and socio-economic factors, are also consistent with the view that the level of parental education is correlated with student success. The idea that there is an important link in Kuwait between the father's educational level and pupil's achievement seems to be logical to this writer. This stems not only from the fact that a well-educated father will be able to provide material benefits for his children, but also it suggests that educated fathers are capable of helping their children in their school work, and can help to create an environment that is more conducive to high academic achievement.

### **9.3 The Interviews:**

When considering how a home environment may be conducive to academic success, it is important to examine the nature of this environment, that is to say the factors that help children to learn or which hinder their learning. The method of interviewing was of particular use in assessing the students' home situation, allowing a comparison between the situation of high achieving students and low achieving students. The interviews indicated that there is a significant difference between the two groups with regard to all the factors assessed in this research. Moreover these factors indicate the existence of underlying factors or basic factors including: family stability, direction and autonomy in family relations, self concept/worth, parental help, rewards and punishment from the family, parental expectations and aspirations, role of peers, homework, siblings achievement, family-school relationship and time spent with children.



### **9.3.1 The Degree of Stability in Family Life:**

Many studies have indicated the importance of stability in family life and its potential effect on the psychological climate within the family and regarding educational achievement of students. In particular, Baumrind (1973) describes two important dimensions of family environment: (a) the degree of parental guidance and control: (b) the amount of emotional support and encouragement parents give to their children. In our study the interviews with the students of the two groups and their parents indicated that there was a difference between the high achieving group and the low achieving group regarding family climate and the degree of stability inside the home. While we found a stable relationship between the high achieving students and their parents, we found the opposite with the low achieving students. In the high achievement group the family stability was clear as both the mother and the father were living in the same house and had a stable relationship themselves. They had developed mutual understanding and sharing and displayed this especially in solving their children's educational problems. By contrast, there was a significant level of divorce and polygamy in the low achievement group. Moreover, in this group, the fathers showed little interest in taking into account their wives' opinions when trying to solve their children's problems, educational or otherwise. This tended to weaken the social stability between the mother and the father and then in turn between them and their children, as represented by the low respect the children showed toward their parents.

Burns & Brassard (1982) found the psychological distress and pain created by divorce had a definite impact on the family and affected both the quality and quantity of parent-child interaction. Schneewind (1992) mentioned that distressed couples can be characterized by a number of negative relationship skills ( e.g. maintenance of irrational beliefs, lack of active listening and self-disclosure) and that the negative skills that

resulted from divorce and polygamy weakened the relationship between parents and negatively affected their children's achievement. Furthermore, Schneewind (1993) found that strained couple relationships and inter-parental conflict seemed to have a negative impact on children's personality development.

In our interviews, family support and the stability of the relationship between the parents themselves, and between them and their children in the high achieving group, were clear during their interactions and were further indicated by the information given regarding mutual respect and freedom of dialogue and discussion between the parents themselves and between them and their children. This made the children feel secure inside their home and positively affected their achievement. Our findings are consistent with those of Estrada et al (1987) who found attentive, warm, and non-restrictive behaviour from parents related to school readiness at age five and six years and with school achievement at age twelve years.

The daily routine of the high achieving group families, which was based on good relationships between family members with a full conviction of the importance of education, was a support and encouragement to all high achievement climates. The existence of quietness and all other necessary elements for doing homework played a major role in helping the children study. The opposite was true in the low achieving group in which many of the previous elements were not provided to the children in this group.

Stevenson (1990) found that children in economically sound families that do not allocate a quiet place in the home for studying, or who fail to provide their children with desks or workbooks demonstrate their family's lack of support for education. He added that such negative conditions are less likely to occur in societies where strong emphasis is placed on education than in those where education is given a less central role in children's lives.

The parents of the high achieving group tried to ensure family stability, support relationships between the family members, to find solutions to their children's difficulties, to give time to their children, to organise the children's time and supervise them inside and outside the home, all of which directly or indirectly affected the home authority. In other words, such parents not only supported their children, but also exercised a great deal of control over them. This motivated the children to perform well. The opposite was true in the low achievement group. This corresponds with Stevenson (1993) who concluded that students from authoritative households ( those providing high level of support and control) tended to have the highest scores in grade-point average. He added that the performance of such students was better than that of students in either authoritarian households ( those low in support and high in control), or in permissive households (those low in both support and control).

### **9.3.2 Direction and Autonomy in Family Relations:**

Stevenson (1993) wrote: " Children's success in school may depend, in part, on the extent to which mother-child interaction fits the cultural model and thereby matches the style of instruction" p 2625 . In other words, Stevenson indicated that when the family follows the same pedagogic model that the educational institution uses, this leads to an increase in the children's achievement. However, every educational system or any culture has models which differ from each other regarding ideas and culture and which may not be suitable to use in another society. For example, Hess and Azuma (1991) found, that persistence in children, a highly admired trait among the Japanese, was significantly related to later academic achievement for Japanese children but not for children in the United States. In contrast, early independence, which is fostered in American culture, was a significant predictor for American, but not for Japanese children's achievement.

Thus, with regard to this study for Kuwait, it was important to consider Kuwait's educational system and its models and the role of this being matched in the families of the high and low achievers.

In order to consider these questions at the beginning we had to recognise that the school system followed in Kuwait is different from that followed in Japan or America. The Kuwaiti syllabus contains the rote learning of Arabic language, songs, The Holy Quran and information acquisition, especially in the primary stage and at the beginning of the intermediate stage. However, at the same time the Kuwaiti system also encourages independence in thinking and effort; this is especially true in subjects like mathematics and science. Hence it can be seen that this system contains the traditional rote system and the system based on independence.

It was apparent from the interviews with the high achieving group that the role of the parents in supervising their children was clear, even if this was achieved only by asking about their homework or by helping them in reciting songs and the Quran, tasks that needed to be learned by heart. The independence factor in this group was also apparent as shown by the parents giving their children the freedom to solve their own problems. In addition, the parents had encouraged self-dependence in their children from a young age. Thus, in this way the parents followed the educational system which tends to reward conformity and rote learning, as well as at the same time allowing independence in solving their own school problems.

In contrast, the low achieving group did not receive help in following the pedagogic model from their parents. Because of the parents' low educational and cultural level, they could not supervise their children or give them information or help them in acquiring skills. At the same time this group's parents were far from being able to instill self-dependence in the children. Thus, again, they were unable to mirror the educational system, and were unable to help develop in their children the ability to think and to try to

succeed in school. From the above we can see that the parents' role is necessary in sustaining the educational system's aims in order to satisfy what the educational institute is seeking to achieve.

The parents of the high achievers had been developing independence and self-confidence in their children since they were young. This along with moderate amounts of parental control and positive emotional support helped to produce a sense of confidence and competence in the pupil. These characteristics, in turn, are qualities considered to be important for high achievement in school. In addition, as these parents gave their children freedom to solve their problems, this increased the children's motivation to think, try and read, thus further preparing the ground for high achievement in school. These findings are consistent with those of Suarez-Orozco (1993). He found that the earlier parents pushed their children to become independent, and rely on themselves to solve problems, the more the motivation to achieve would be fostered.

### **9.3.3 Self Concept/ Worth:**

Markus and Wurf (1987) found that both the choice of an adequate environment and the shaping of that environment according to one's needs and expectations are affected by one's self-concept. From this, it can be understood that a well developed sense of self-confidence can lead to a beneficial environment, while a lack of self-confidence can lead to a negative environment. This confirms what the researcher found.

It was clear from speaking with the high achievers and their families that respect for and the developing of self-confidence has an important role in the children's life. There were many elements that the parents in this group cultivated which encouraged their children's positive growth, such as respect for freedom to determine their future career, as well as freedom to choose their friends and to choose their hobbies. Moreover, some of the parents shared in the children's hobbies, which spread a climate of love and cordiality in

the house. In addition, this sharing and encouragement built confidence between the parents and their children which made the children feel responsible for themselves. This motivated the children and spread a climate of healthy competition between them, producing a desire to perform well at school. In contrast, these factors did not appear in the low achieving group in which the parents' action or lack of action seemed to weaken the self-concept/worth of the children and in turn weakened their educational achievement.

Coopersmith (1967), in his prominent studies found that the parenting style used by parents of boys with high self-esteem was characterized by high acceptance of their children within the limits set by the parents' standards and social norms, respect for the individual, and clearly defined limits on their children's activities. The existence of high concepts of confidence and respect in the family environment in the high achieving group showed a clear and effective role not only on the children's life inside the family, but also on the children's behaviour in the school environment. The love, confidence and freedom which existed in the high achiever's families was reflected in the children's behaviour at school: they felt confident when speaking with their teachers and social specialist and could discuss any difficulty whether small or big. This increased their understanding and encouraged them to try to achieve more. Moreover, we found that in the high achieving group, the high achievement and success of the children was not a coincidence but had resulted from successive high performance and increase in self-worth over a number of years. The opposite was true in the low achieving group. These findings correspond with Helmke (1993) on two points: first, there is considerable stability in both academic achievement and self-concept of ability; second, when cross-legged effects are found at all, the pattern of causation is mostly reciprocal, indicating that the academic self-concept is (at least partially) cause and a consequence of academic achievement. From this it is clear that there is a cyclical connection between the family

environment, self-concept and educational achieve. The positivity of one of them will affect positively the other and so on, while the opposite is also true, a negative cause will create a negative effect and so on.

#### **9.3.4 Parental Help**

The parental help given to the high achieving group played a role in increasing the children's educational achievement. This help was divided into two kinds: first, direct help for school work; second, indirect help. The direct help was represented by parents giving enough time to their children to help them learn their homework, for example, reciting the Quran, and giving them different examples that make the particular concept more personal or relevant. Indeed, parental help in school and with homework is necessary in Kuwait to facilitate the effort of absorbing the great quantity of information, especially that which has to be learned by heart which is so often given. With regard to the low achieving group, very little direct parental help was given. Heath (1983) found children from families where readings are critiqued are able to use such skills in school, whereas those from families where readings are strictly literal will be at a disadvantage in many classrooms.

The high academic level of the parents of the high achieving group was a factor in facilitating their task of helping with their children's school work. In contrast, the low academic level of the parents of the low achievers and their preoccupation with other matters were reasons for the low quality of help given to their children in doing their homework. This finding is supported by Connell et al (1982) who found that belonging to an elite father become more involved in the education of their independent school children as they moved up the grades, whereas working class families tended to lose contact as their ability to help with homework diminishes. The second kind of parental help, that is indirect help, given to the high achieving group was represented in the home

environment by several aspects. Firstly, the parents organised the children's time and gave every activity the appropriate level of priority in which there was time for doing homework, time for watching TV and time for playing. This created a balance in the child's life and introduced psychological comfort inside the home. By contrast, in the low achieving group parents there was a clear weakness in organising their children's time. As one student herself indicated she spent a long time watching TV and her parents did not supervise her. This made her neglect her homework, thus causing her to have low achievement. This is supported by Williams (1982) who found evidence that viewing television up to 10 hours per week had a positive impact on achievement, but that viewing more than 10 hours per week had a negative impact.

A further example of indirect help given to the high achievers was provision a good place for studying with enough light, furniture and equipment, and quiet. This created a suitable environment for thinking, researching and reading as Cohen, Glass and Singer (1973) indicated. In contrast to this, such practical provisions were not clear in the mind of the low achieving group's parents. In addition, due to the high number of family members resulting from polygamy or an extended family, there was little opportunity for the necessary quiet space in which to study. Accordingly this reflected negatively on the children's achievement.

A third source of indirect help given to the high achievers was the providing of cultural stimuli: such as a library containing a number of scientific books and cultural magazines. Some of these books concerned the children's school subjects, their future career and their hobbies. This motivated them to search for information and read more. They also provided educational programmes via computer and video in the house which helped the children acquire even more knowledge. The ambitions of the parents of the high achieving group were clear; they wanted to encourage and motivate their children to read different types of information, thus giving them a strong general background. The



importance of this kind of help in encouraging high achievement is supported by Keeves (1972) who found a significant relationship between parents' ambitions and the so-called "cultural" home, where books were widely used and homework was considered important.

In the low achieving group, on the other hand, there was a clear weakness in the provision of extra stimulation to support the interests of the children. Some parents actually felt extra reading and video could be detrimental which indicated the weak understanding of the parents for the educational role of those stimulation. Other parents in this group might have provided cultural sources in the house like books, magazines and video films, but they did not consider whether these were valuable or suitable for their children or whether these would increase their children's general knowledge or support their school studies. This led to a weak cultural base for the children which did not help further their achievement in school

The inclusion of a variety of family activities, especially highly interactive ones, plays a large part in success at school; this then may be considered as a fourth indirect aid to high achievement. Such activities in our study were represented by: parents' listening to their children recount what they had done in school and then discussing school problems with each other if they existed. The parents of the high achievers used a scientific style of discussion and analysis to help solve their children's school problems. This discussion and dialogue between the parents and their children led to a great deal of interaction. Furthermore, family activity included giving the children the freedom to choose hobbies, trying to provide all the requisites for these hobbies and then sharing their hobbies with them. These kinds of family activities confirmed and reinforced the school's cognitive activities such as reading, general knowledge, experimentation and analysis. Such reinforcement reflected positively in the children's achievement, a fact which is consistent with the findings of Soto (1990) who wrote: " Families can serve as educators

for their children by providing activities and facilitating learning at home. The home learning environment or process variables present in the home can help to enhance children's school achievement" (p4). In another study, Scott- Jones (1984) realised that high-readiness children were often involved in a selection of activities, self-initiated questions and statements, play, and free time activities. Amota and Ochilree (1986) also reached the same conclusion when they found that the frequency of family activities such as outings, playing games together, and talking about television programmes was significantly correlated with reading test scores for a representative sample of primary school children.

This kind of family activity was largely absent in the life of the low achievers. This lack was due to the large amount of time parents had to spend on their work or their choice to spend their free time with their friends in the Dewaniya. In addition, the amount of shared interests such as in hobbies was minimal, due again to the parents' lack of spare time or due to their lack of ability to provide the requirements for hobbies. Consequently, the amount of positive educational interaction within the family was very limited and this reflected negatively on the children in this group in school.

A fifth type of indirect educational help given by parents of the high achievers was the encouragement to try to attain high achievement even if they received low marks in an exam. This kind of help made the students feel secure. These parents praised good work and sought to find solutions to poor work. The opposite was true in the low achieving group: the parents' level of encouragement and expression of happiness to their children when they received high marks was low, while only their disappointment or anger was made obvious when the children did badly. This reflected negatively on the children and made them feel frustrated which in turn weakened their performance and led to all-round low achievement in school.

Massey (1987) indicated that a child who has had the opportunity to feel in control realised that these were the results of her/his actions. He added that from this the child gained a sense of power which was translated in the school setting by the child manipulating her/his environment.

From the preceding indications of parental help in the high achieving group, we can say that providing such help to the children, whether directly or indirectly, has an important role in forming a suitable environment for the children to increase and improve their recognition and therefore perform well at school. It may also be seen that the opposite was true in the low achieving group where helping was limited and achievement was low. This conclusion is supported by Marjoribanks (1987) and Bybee (1982) who indicated that the family may act as a critical substratum variable that influences the relation between children's attitudinal and cognitive attributes and their academic performance.

A final point is that the help given by the parents of the high achieving group was built on a base of parental motivation, personal experience as well as interest both in surmounting difficulties and in education itself. This base was almost totally lacking in the parents of the low achieving group. This supported by Kalinowski and Sloane (1981) who pointed out that " parental involvement refers to parents' interests, motivation and involvement in providing experiences in the home that are conducive to the child's achievement in school" (p. 93).

#### **9.3.5 Rewards and Punishment from the Family:**

Lens (1993) indicates that most students, even those with a strong intrinsic motivation, are more highly motivated by extrinsic rewards and goals. Suarez- Orozco (1989) also found a significant concern with achievement motivation in the context of very strong needs for family affiliation and nurturing.

During the interviews with the high achieving group of children it was clear that rewards, whether psychological ones like praise, or material ones like presents represented important interactions in the family. This reflected a picture of a good relationship between the family members and was an incentive for high achievement. In this group the children's feelings of their parents' interest in them was translated as a reward. This created an internal competition between the children to see who could attain high achievement in school.

However, in the high achieving group, rewards do not only play a role in creating competition between the children inside the family, but also in increasing self-efficacy and competence. The evidence of this was seen in that the children were confident about speaking with their parents and discussing with them the problems they were facing in their life. This reflected positively in how they spoke and discussed ideas or problems with their teachers and social specialist in school. They were able to ask their teachers for more information about anything they found difficult with a high level of self-confidence and without any shame. This in turn led to an increase in motivation to attain high achievement. This is supported by Bandura (1986) who concludes that perceptions and feelings of self-efficacy ( "I am good at it "; " I can do it") are intrinsically motivating. Suarez-Orozco and Devos (1993) also indicated that the more and the earlier parents pushed their children to become independent, and to turn to themselves to solve problems, the more the motivation to achieve would be fostered.

In addition, the high motivation of the high achievers implied other aspects that helped them to achieve, including increasing persistence and allocation of more time for studying and doing homework. These in turn produced good results and allowed them to obtain rewards. The opposite was true in the low achieving group due to the low level of any kind of rewards.

In brief, we can say that rewards have a clear role in spreading a climate of competition and an interest in increasing self-efficacy, competence and self-confidence. This leads to an increase in educational motivation by increasing persistence and by learning to allocate enough time for studying. These findings are confirmed by a number of researchers. Lens ( 1993) noted that " motivational psychology assumes a positive linear relationship between strength of motivation and persistence, the stronger the motivation to study, the more time spent studying" (p 3937.) And Deci and Ryan (1985) indicated that rewards strengthen perceptions and feeling of competence , enhancing the intrinsic motivation. This fits with the conclusion of Abdulraheem (1991) who indicated that if parents encourage their children to get high levels of achievement verbally or by giving them a present or by taking them on a trip as reward, this may be considered a factor which pushes the students to continue studying and then obtain a high achievement level in school.

Punishment of course, is the other side of reward. Regarding punishment the high achieving group almost never experienced this at home. Instead, the style used to solve any school problems that might exist was based on analysing the problem and understanding the reasons for it. In addition, the parents would help solve the problem by assisting the children in their homework and by creating a motivating home full of sympathy and interaction. This strengthens the relationship and interactions between the parents and their children and then affects their achievement. In direct contrast, the parents of the low achieving group often punish their children by swearing at them or by beating them. It was clear from the interviews that physical and verbal punishment had a negative effect on the relationship between the parents and their children, which was already weak because of the small amount of interaction between them. Of course this then led to limiting the benefit to the children of learning from parental experience and

information, and further created a kind of alienation between the parents and their children.

It was clear from the interviews that the modest educational and cultural level of the low achieving group's parents was one of the reasons that pushed them to use punishment.

The lack of knowledge about the negative effects of the punishment on the children was not clear in these parents' minds. One of the parents indicated that although he beat his daughter and she still got low achievement but he did not understand this. The low ability of these families to help their children and the lack of recognition regarding the negative effects of beating mean that these families tend to believe that punishment would have a positive effect on their children. However, what actually happened was the opposite in that punishment created negative relations between the parents and their children and may indeed have been one of the causes for the children's low achievement. In contrast, the parents of the high achieving group clearly understood the negative consequences.

This agrees with the conclusion of Al-Shaikh ( 1989) who found that a mother from the middle classes had the ability to create hopes for her children and felt that she could have an effect on their performance to help them attain a high achievement level, whereas a mother who had low education felt that she had little effect on her children's performance, so she tried to use bodily beating because she thought that this method would have more effect on her children. And this will led to a negative effect on achievement.

In a general, it was clear that the fact that parents of the high achieving group used rewards that agreed with their children's interests and did not believe in using punishment had a role in motivating their children indirectly to attain a high achievement level. By contrast, it was generally apparent that the lack of rewards and the use of punishment by the parents of the low achieving group indirectly helped to push their children towards low achievement.

### **9.3.6 The Role of Parental Expectations and Aspirations**

It was clear that between high achieving group parents and their children dialogue and freedom in discussing possible future careers created a fertile channel that helped the parents learn of their children's views and interests regarding their future careers.

According to this discovery, the parents provided their children with background experience useful to those careers and gave suitable encouragement to them to satisfy what they desired to do with their life. In the case of the low achieving group, however, this dialogue was nearly non-existent which led to the weakening of the family relationship and encouragement and in turn negatively affected the children's achievement. Turkey (1974) mentioned that the presence of a dialogue between the students and their parents accompanied by freedom of choice plays a major role in high achievement. Etaugh (1984) also mentioned in his study that as a result of dual parental involvement, the children show an increase in performance at school. The opposite, parental lack of interest may have a negative effect on the student's achievement in the low achieving group.

In the high achieving group the parent's encouragement to discuss with their children their future career played a role in determining a goal for them. This goal made the children and their parents think about how they could pursue their aim which they then translated into different kinds of behaviour such as hard study and persistence, finally leading the children to high achievement. This process agreed with the conclusion of Alexander and Cook (1979) who found that students who firmed up their career plans early in life had higher levels of educational and occupational achievement.

The high expectations and aspirations of the high achieving group's parents for their children regarding whether to attain a high educational level or to secure high-level jobs, which were congruent with their own high cultural educational level, played a role in the

parents providing a motivating environment for their children. The parents, in effect, encouraged their children to pursue their own dreams and aspirations. This of course required more effort and special disciplined behaviour from the children. In contrast, the low achieving group's parents' expectations and aspirations for their children regarding education or getting job were modest due to their own low educational and culture level. This consequently, tended to weaken the motivating environment in the house with regard to academic performance and hard study.

It was clear from our study that parental expectations and aspirations had a major role in affecting their children's expectations and aspirations either negatively and positively. This is supported by Saha (1993) who found from his research that aspirations and expectations reflect the values imbued by parents and can be interpreted as a form of family encouragement. These findings are similar to those of Musgrave (1967) who indicated the formation of aspirations and expectations and who suggested that they are influenced by the family.

During the interviews it was clear that the role of the high achieving group's parents was always to encourage their children. Although sometimes there may have been some lack of ability in the children, the parents' expectations and aspirations for their children to receive a high level of education and high level jobs was a strong incentive to motivate the children to increase their efforts and change their behaviour in order to achieve what their parents wanted. In contrast, the infrequent encouragement of the children's performance in the low achieving group was a frustrating factor for this group's children. This weakened their motivation to follow the behaviour that would lead to improving their performance and reflected negatively on their educational achievement. These findings corresponds with Stevenson and Fuligni (1993) who found that children stop being motivated to work hard when they believed they were already meeting the standards set by their parents. And Suarez-Orozco (1993) found that children in a lower



social and cultural level may not complete their higher education because of lack of motivation. These findings are similar to, Soto (1990) who showed that in the lower achievers' homes, the parents had lower expectations of educational achievement, and they were often more permissive with their children, while in the homes of higher achievers the parents at all times knew the whereabouts of their children, and they had higher expectations for their child's educational achievement.

From the above we can say that the high aspirations and expectations of the high achieving group's parents for their children was not only a contributory factor in finding a channel for interaction between them, but was also one of the main factors in stimulating motivation and influencing the children's future expectations and aspirations, and was at the same time a factor in helping them learn behaviour that could lead to high performance and high achievement. The opposite was true in the low achieving group. This finding is supported by Carpenter et al (1981) who found that aspirations not only affect attainments but also act as key mediating variables in transmitting anterior factors into subsequent behaviours. Shoeib (1982) also found a strong relationship between the educational achievement of children and parents' aspirations towards school. Scott-Jones (1982) also provided evidence that the precision of mothers' expectations was highly correlated with the child's performance on cognitive tasks.

### **9.3.7 The Role of Peers**

The authoritative nature of high achieving group's families, which has been described as a family showing a high level of support and control meant that those families were interested in every aspect regarding the family, including their children's friendship. Although the parents gave their children freedom to choose their friends they never forgot to supervise this choice even if they only did it indirectly. The importance the parents placed on choosing friends was made clear by the parents themselves in the

interviews. They talked about the importance of instilling self-confidence in their children and because of their inexperience helping them to choose friends who are of a similar educational level. The parents felt such parity would benefit their children and encourage them to succeed. This was in addition to taking care that their friends' family situation was appropriate to their own children's environment and that it was free from any of the problems which could affect their children's achievement. These views corresponded with many studies and much research which gives a great deal of importance to childhood friendship from a very young age. The parents of the low achieving group allowed their children to choose their friends randomly. These parents were either too busy or too uninterested to care about who their children's friends were. Without parental guidance, the low achievers tended to choose friends of a similarly low academic achievement level as they felt more comfortable with such children. Furthermore, since no control was exercised over friends, relationships were formed with children who affected the pupils recent and future educational achievement negatively. Dryfoos (1990) found that having peers who engage in risk behaviour, and having a low resistance to participating with such peers, are factors associated with an adolescent's exhibiting such behaviour themselves. Although the educational system in Kuwait has little interest in encouraging peer-tutoring between students, the high achieving group's parents were interested in this aspect. The evidence for this was that the parents in this group were insistent that their children choose their friends from the academically superior group in order to have the opportunity of exchanging experiences and information between them so that their children would benefit. The existence of this kind of education acquired from friends should motivate both pupils and should lead to a kind of healthy competition between them so that they both achieve at higher levels.

Damon and Phelps (1989) indicated that the interaction between instructor and pupil is more balanced and more lively when the tutor is a peer. Indeed in our study, exchanging information between the high achieving group and their friends who were also high achievers affected the educational progress and other activities of the children in this group positively. This is again supported by Damon and Phelps (1989) who found that in terms of value for children's learning, peer relations offer a context for support and discovery. Pontecorvo (1993) also provided evidence that peer tutoring is particularly effective for increasing knowledge acquisition in tutors. In addition, the high achieving children in our study were more able to create new ideas through exchanging views with their friends. This corresponds with Krappman (1992) and Youniss (1980) who found that children learn through peer interaction because it introduces them to the possibilities of cooperative activity.

Just as the high achievers were influenced by their peers, so the low achievers were too. However, in this case the low achievers were negatively affected by their friends. This agreed with the conclusion of Hartup (1978) and Johnson (1981) who both asserted that peers do influence each other in many important modes of behaviour, including aspirations, achievement, values and attitudes, social skills, and appropriate sex roles.

### **9.3.8 Homework**

The high achieving group parents' interest in homework was demonstrated in two ways: firstly, they tried to provide anything that would facilitate home study including a good study place, either a separate room or quiet shared room; with few people, suitable furniture such as a table and chair; a library, either inside the child's room or inside the house; and quietness inside the house. Secondly, they actively shared in doing the homework by organising the child's time, giving homework a priority, and asking about the homework itself, giving enough time to see the homework, helping in explanations

and discussing any difficulties. The parents' active interest in homework was an effective factor in their children's high achievement, especially since the school system in Kuwait tends to give a large amount of homework to the child in order to cover all the requirements of the curriculum, and such an amount of homework necessitates the cooperation of the family in order for it to be done successfully. In contrast, the low interest of the low achieving group's parents in organising their children's time, in giving the children enough time, in helping to explain difficulties and in providing a good environment conducive to good academic performance and doing homework, played a negative role in the children's development which weakened their motivation to do homework and weakened their ability to digest school work in general. This of course led to low achievement. Walberg (1984) indicated that students who fall behind academically find their classroom work and homework more difficult and as a result less satisfying.

It was clear that the high educational and cultural level of the high achieving group's parents was a contributory factor in the parents' ability to help with homework and so affect positively their children's educational achievement. The opposite was true in the low achieving group. This is supported by Soto (1990) who wrote that the " Family can serve as educators for their children by providing activities and facilitating learning at home. The home learning environment or process variables present in the home can help to enhance children's school achievement" (p 4). Leone and Richards (1989) also provide evidence that increased time on homework among fourth to ninth grade students was positively related to achievement. They added that homework was more effective when parents were active in supervising it.

### **9.3.9 Sibling Achievement**

The interviews with the high achieving group indicated that all the siblings were high achievers. This meant that the home environment was rich in information and experiences which definitely were exchanged between the children in this group and their siblings. It was also clear that the role of the high achieving group's parents in stimulating children was very important in creating competition between the siblings. This would help them benefit from each other and definitely motivated them to get high achievement. The existence of high achieving siblings in the house and contact and interaction between the parents and the siblings stimulated the exchange of experiences and ideas, the discussion of difficulties and learning from the previous experiences of the older brother or the sister. This created a motivating environment for achieving and for exchanging opinions. Hughes (1989) stated that, " Brothers and sisters have a profound effect on the education of each other". He added that in many families, older children have substantial values in the raising and training of their young siblings. By contrast to the high achievers, the low achieving group's siblings were low achievers and failures who definitely affected negatively the home environment.

The role of siblings in both groups had an effective role in the home. All behaviour and interactions occurred naturally during contact with and observation of each other inside the house, and this interchange affected positively or negatively each others' behaviour and performance. Bandura (1986) indicated that virtually all behavioural, cognitive, and affective learning resulting from direct-experience can occur vicariously by observing people's behaviour and its consequences for them. So the transferred experiences from the siblings in the high achieving group which were represented as success, superiority, high motivation and a good impression of the role of education had a positive effect on this group's achievement. In contrast, the failure and low achievement which was transferred from the low achieving group's siblings had a negative effect on the pupils

which frustrated them and affected their academic behaviours and was a cause of their low achievement. This is supported by Bandura (1986) who indicated that people are easily aroused by the emotional expressions of others. He added that what gives significance to vicarious emotional arousal is that observers can acquire emotional reactions, lasting attitudes and behavioural proclivities toward places, things, persons that have been associated with modeled emotional experiences.

A further finding that seems significant from our study was that of birth order. In the high achieving group there was a concentration of pupils who were the first, second or third child, which probably indicated that they had more contact with their parents and their parents took more interest in them. This parental interest is especially high at the beginning of forming the family when the parents are occupied less because of the small size of the family. The greater parental interest in the high achieving group reflected positively on their children. In contrast the birth order of low achieving group's children showed that there was a concentration of children who were seventh or higher which indicated that the interest of those parents was low due to the heavy burden on them because of the large number of children. This affected this group of children's achievement negatively. These findings are similar to those of Nuttal et al (1976) and Hetherington (1979) who found that first-born children had higher academic achievement than did later born children.

In addition, the interviews' results indicated that the family size of the high achieving group was small compared with the low achieving group's. This gave the high achieving group's parents more time to take care of their children and to help them if needed.

However, the large number of children in the low achieving group families was a barrier for them with regard to controlling and supervising their children. This led to low quality interactions between the family members and thus reflected negatively on the children's

achievement. These findings are consistent with Clifford (1983) and Dawoud (1984) who found an important relationship between family size and achievement at school.

#### **9.3.10 Family- School Relationship**

Palanki et al (1992) indicated that the 1990s have seen a marked upsurge of policy maker interest in the school- parent relationship. The concept of the educational role of the school- family relationship includes the importance of cooperation and support between the two in order to benefit the students educationally and psychologically. Many parents think that their educational responsibilities are finished once their children are registered in school and they think they have to only satisfy the children's material needs and that the school alone is responsible for doing the rest. Also, many teachers think that their responsibilities are limited to the school walls and the rest should be left to the parents. But in fact both of them are wrong according to Epstein (1987) who indicated that many efforts, supported by teachers, educators, and school officials, should be made to strengthen home-school relationships. The cooperation between the home and the school in educating students helps each of them to do their educational functions well. The existence of a good relationship and cooperation between the school and the home produce a number of positive outcomes such as motivating students to gain higher achievement. Payne (1993) indicated that the primary objective of establishing and maintaining good relationships with parents is to stimulate the motivation and academic achievement of children in school. Other researchers have indicated other aims such as providing incentives for parents to up- grade their own academic skills or take other action to improve their quality of life, bringing together parents whose children have similar special education needs, and providing support for parents, ( Brantlinger 1991). What is the nature of the relationship and cooperation between the school and the home in intermediate schools in Kuwait ? And what efforts are made by both school and home

to facilitate the achievement of the aims and products of such cooperation, one of which is motivating the students to attain high achievement? During the interviews it was observed that the high achieving group's parents consistently visited the school whether the school called them or not and this indicated to what extent they liked to find out about their children's school problems and to know first-hand what exactly happened in school. These visits helped in providing a good relationships between the parents and school and social specialist which made the parents feel comfortable. These good relationships then affected the relationship between the children and their teachers and social specialist: the pupil-school relationship was a mirror of the relationship between the parents and the school. In addition, the relationship between the school and parents allowed both sides to exchange experiences and information and allowed the parents to not only know about the school activities but also to provide their experience and skills regarding them. It was observed further that the high achieving group's parents' contact with the school gave them the freedom to give their opinions about how to solve their children's school problems or other problems that might be barriers to their learning. Consequently, the children's relationship with the school was easier and more effective. Theoretical support for practice guidelines regarding parent-teacher communication is found in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) argument that the potential for settings to enhance child development is strongest when there are supportive linkages between the various settings in which the child is a participant. These supportive linkages include open two-way communication and a personal mode of information exchange.

The discussion and exchange of opinions between the high achieving group's parents and teachers and the social specialist was an important factor in providing the school with a clear picture of the child's situation and his interests inside the home. At the same time it gave the parents a clear picture of their child's situation inside the classroom, his achievement and his problems. The outcome of this was that the child was helped more



positively from both sides and therefore achieved more. Lareau (1987) indicated that in middle-class communities, however, parents saw education as a shared enterprise and scrutinized, monitored, and supplemented the school experience of their children. In addition, the visits by parents of the high achievers provided the parents with skills to help their children study in the house. They learned this by connecting with the teachers and benefiting from their experiences.

From the above we can say that the high achieving group's parents' regular visits to and communication with the school produced two effects. First, the family was provided with an inclusive picture of the child, his problems if found and his strengths and weaknesses, and the parents were also able to learn from the teachers' modern ways of teaching and motivating children. This of course benefited the child and as a result the child was able to perform better. Secondly, the school-family communication gave the school the chance to know more details about the child's environment, problems, and interests inside the class. With this knowledge, the school tried to use everything that would benefit the child which reflected positively on his performance in school. It was clear that the high achieving group's parents' desire to ask about their children, was one of the main reasons which led to the interaction between school and home and as such has played a role in increasing the children's achievement. The parent-school relationship affected the family's home environment to form a kind of interconnectedness as Lareau (1989) explains, " Parents' actions influenced their children's schooling and children's school experiences influenced family life" (p. 81.) Al Shatti (1983) also indicated that cooperation between the school and the home helps in finding solutions for some problems that the school may face or even that the parents may face in the house, such as the educational achievement of the student.

In contrast, the low number of visits and communication of low achieving group's parents indicated a negative relationship between school and home. This is in spite of the school

encouragement for visits. In this group there was little contact between the parents and the teachers and social specialist, as a result, it was difficult for either the parents or the school to form an inclusive picture of the students' problems, their points of weakness, their environment conditions and their interests. This weak relationship between the school and the parents was reflected in the way the child related with his teachers and social specialist. In addition, there was no opportunity for the parents to learn about the schools' actual functioning and as such the parents' appreciation of the important role of the school in their children's lives was never developed. Moreover, although the parents had little first-hand knowledge of the teacher's ability and performance in helping the children to attain high achievement they also had nothing on which to base any real comment or criticism.

The interviews demonstrated that the low achieving group's parents regarded their children's achievement as the affair of one agent that is of the school. They believed the school was responsible for everything regarding their children's achievement. They wanted their children to succeed but depended entirely on the school to do this. As mentioned before, at the same time their sharing in the school was very limited, which they justified by their lack of time, their low educational level and their embarrassment at speaking with the teachers and social specialist, and this affected their children's achievement in various ways. However, one of the main consequences was the school's inability to form a complete picture of the child. Indeed, the school's knowledge of the child's home environment and the sharing with parents in finding the best solutions, alternatives and suggestions to help improve the child's home study environment is one of the most important contributions which the parents can provide the school with. However, the reality in our study, was quite the opposite.

During interviews with the teachers, they indicated that they depended on getting to know the low achieving students only by daily observation inside the class. This

indicated that there was no previous plan from their side regarding the best way to get a complete picture of the low achievers and their socio-economic conditions. At the same time, the teachers and social specialist indicated the difficulties that they faced in trying to communicate with the low achieving group's parents. This communication was limited to writing letters or telephone calls when the students had problems, but most parents were either slow or negligent in responding. This is because there is no special system for home visits in Kuwait. The interviews further indicated that the school rarely used the students' files in monitoring them and recording their conditions and problems. This was obvious from the shortness of the file itself and the terms used in which there was in interest in recording the history of the student's academic problems or the internal problems of the family such as divorce, polygamy and soon which generally affect the home environment.

It was clear from our study that the means of communication used by the school in Kuwait while being sufficient to some extent for the high achieving group's parents, because of their high cultural level and their high interest in communicating, interaction and quick response, was not suitable for the low achieving group's parents. The parents of low achievers participated very little in the school-family exchange due to their low educational and cultural level, their permanent lack of time, and low motivation due to the lack of understanding of the importance of the visits. As a result, the high achieving group benefited academically while the low achieving group did not. This agreed with Al Khadra's findings (1983) that exchanged trust between parents and teachers encourages the parents to express their opinions and suggestions which leads to an improved educational process.

### **9.3.11 Role Models (Parents)**

It was clear from the interviews with the two groups that there was a similarity within each group regarding student's ideas and behaviours and parents' ideas and behaviour. It was also clear that both the home environment and the adults' affectivity had an important role in influencing the children either positively or negatively. This agrees with what social cognitive theory indicates: that people are neither driven by inner forces nor shaped and controlled by the environment. Instead, people function as influential contributors to their own development and psychosocial functioning within a network of reciprocally interacting influences (Bandura 1986).

The model presented by the parents of the high achieving group included such behaviours and interactions inside the family as respect for and encouragement of educational achievement, giving enough time to listen to the child, discussing school problems, motivating the child to obtain high marks and a good career, spreading a climate of love and cooperation between the parents and providing the child's needs to do his homework, thus further encouraging him to perform well. Such a model had a clear effect on the student's behaviour, making him more motivated to attain high achievement and go on to a good career and through this the student's academic ability developed positively. This agreed with Bandura (1993) who found modeling is not a process of behavioural mimicry; rather, modeling influences and conveys rules for generative and innovative behaviour. The similarity between this group's parents and their children was ascertainable on a number of points: there was similarity in ambition, similarity in their high educational and functional level, and similarity in the good relationship between them, the teachers and the social specialist. As this group's children themselves indicated this similarity was due to the influence of their parents who motivated their ambition for a high level of education and indicated the importance of this in life. In addition, the parents provided influence in the area of potential careers by facilitating access to

appropriate ones and motivating them to satisfy their parents' dreams. At the same time the parents encouraged their children's self-confidence especially in dealing with teachers and the social specialist, a result of their own confidence and easy contact with the school. This parental behaviour directly and indirectly led the children to attain high achievement.

In contrast, the model of low achieving group's parents included behaviour showing low interest in and encouragement of education, the lack of enough time for listening and discussing, low motivational input for obtaining high marks and a good career, and low provision for the child's needs for doing homework. This model affected the children's behaviour in this group and led to behaviour and attitudes similar to their parents'. Such similarity was indicated by the students' satisfaction to follow any low level career and to be satisfied with a low educational achievement. This lack of ambition weakened the children's motivation and creation, resulting in low achievement. In addition, the nature of the parents' behaviour in this group was far from instilling self-confidence. Their inability to form a good relationship with the school was transferred to their children. Such inability was indicated by the parent's embarrassment and hesitancy in dealing with the school. This is supported by Bandura ( 1993) who found that the actions of models can serve as social prompts that activate, channel, and support previously learned behaviour. He added that observers can acquire lasting attitudes, behavioural proclivities toward places or things that have been associated with modeled emotional experiences. To sum up, we can say that behaviours, experiences, ambition and expectations, whether positive or negative, are transferred from parents (models) to their children during observation and contact. Furthermore, children tend to exhibit the same behaviours and experiences as their parents and these will be reflected positively or negatively in their educational achievement.

### **9.3.12 Time Spent with Children**

During the interviews it was clear that the high achieving group's parents spent more time with their children's homework than the low achieving group's parents. Spending enough time with the children provided the opportunity for positive sharing. Shared time was used for direct help, such as going over recitations and providing information to help explain any difficult material. This definitely had a positive effect on the children's achievement. In addition, spending enough time also had an indirect influence on the children as the parents had a chance to increase contact with their children, to learn of their problems and try to find solutions. Spending time together helped in supporting relationships and ideas between the parents and their children which again affected the children's behaviour toward themselves and toward education. This positive behaviour influenced their educational achievement in school. This is supported by Larson (1983) who found a tendency toward a positive association between time spent with the family and school performance and involvement.

It was clear that the high achieving group's parents' interest was not limited to spending enough time with their children, but they were also interested in the quality of that time. They supplied quality by, as Smith (1990) indicated, giving examples that would help in solving school problems and discussing homework. In addition, the parents spent time hearing about their children's hobbies and in those hobbies. This was significant for as Leibowitz (1977) points out parents improve their children's academic achievement by spending more time with their children's pursuit of activities that aid in cognitive development.

It was clear that in spite of the high achieving group's parents' busy schedule there was a kind of time organisation which allowed them to spend enough time with their children and this quality and quantity of time spent helped to increase the children's achievement. By contrast, the low interest of the low achieving group's parents in spending enough

time with their children and the low quality of that time had a negative effect on their children's behaviour. In addition these parents' social and economic commitments and their low cultural level was a barrier which meant that these families had no time to spend with their children. This low contact and lack of cooperation and information exchange had a negative effect on the children's behaviour toward their homework and their achievement. Bennett (1982) quotes studies suggesting a positive relationship between the total amount of time spent by pupils on curriculum tasks and their academic achievement.

#### **9.4 Summary**

From the previous discussion, it can be seen that each of the factors mentioned had a clear influence on the students and on their educational achievement. But it is important to determine the most important factors and their significance. It can be said that life stability within family life, both economic and social, is the first essential factor since it has a basic role in influencing the children's achievement. A family which does not have internal stability is unlikely to help or reward their children, supervise their contact with peers, form a good relationship with teachers, affect their children positively or spend enough time with them. As a proverb says "the one who is losing things cannot give them to anyone else". Social and economic stability inside the family has an important influence on the family; on the quality of the family's authority and on the social mechanism inside the house.

The second most important factor can be called parental involvement. Under this umbrella heading we can include helping, rewarding, expectations, supervision of their children's friends, good relationships with the school, encouraging self-confidence and acting as role models. And in third place is the factor of time spent with children. In other words, stability of life inside the family and parents' involvement and interest in education along with enough time spent with children, which we could name

triangulation factors (see Figure 9.2), gives an inclusive picture of the influencing factors on children's environment and on those behaviours which definitely affect their achievement. The obvious existence of the above- mentioned factors in the high achieving group influenced this group's children and so influenced their educational achievement. By contrast, the weakness of the previous factors was one of the reasons that led to the children's low achievement in the low achieving group (see Figure 9.3).

### **9.5 Deviant Cases:**

During the interviews it was clear that the role of the educational- cultural factor of the parents was a subsidiary factor in the previous factors. If this is true, as explained from interview results, it becomes important to understand the situation of the family, including interactions between fathers, mothers and children and to know how to explain the deviant cases in which the educational cultural factor of the parents was low and their children were high achievers, or the opposite, in which the parents had a high educational- cultural level but their children were low achievers. To understand the preceding it is important to look at the case studies.

The cases of Salma and Ammar were similar in that they both had high achievement but different in that the educational- cultural level of the families were not the same.

However, after further investigation it became apparent that there were many other similar aspects. The role of understanding and cooperation between the mother and the father was clear in both cases as represented by parental sharing in decision- making when trying to solve their children's problems, the exchanging of roles between them when one of them was absent and the activity of helping their children as much as they could by giving them as much as possible in terms of energy and information. Although the high educational cultural factor of Ammar's family was an assistant factor in creating



the cooperation between the mother and the father in supervising their children, the existence of that cooperation between Salma's parents was a result of the high ambition of the family as represented by the father's ambition and interest in the education which he had lost since childhood and which had caused him to work hard to compensate for his own loss. Hence, he shared with his wife in providing a healthy family environment to satisfy their internal ambitions and motivate their children to perform well and create their own opportunities. The cooperation of the mother and the father can be seen from many instances in both families. In Ammar's family it is represented in the permanent cooperation between the mother and the father in which one took the other's place if the other was absent and in which both shared in solving all their children's problems, shared in providing good and motivating environment for achievement, and shared together in asking about their children in school during visits. The cooperation of Salma's family is represented in the father's determination to help his children, his desire for the mother to complete her education and to enroll in an illiteracy erasure centre which she accepted in order to benefit her children, their sharing together in creating a motivating environment for their children inside the house, the relationship of the siblings in helping each other, especially in matters where the parents cannot help, and in the parents creating a climate of happiness in the house.

Fehrmann et al (1987), and Epstein (1984) show that success in school is positively related to parental involvement in the child's schooling. The parental involvement, their interest and positive encouraging in education has a clear role in both Ammar's and Salma's families. Regarding Ammar's family this is shown by the parents' listening to their children and instilling self-confidence from childhood. The parents' happiness, gives freedom to the children to choose their future careers and friends, organise their time, help in doing homework, provide a good motivating environment for achievement and respect and support relationships between home and school. The same interest and

behaviour took place in Salma's family showing that the parent's low educational-cultural level was not a barrier to them. The strong ambition of the parents and their respect for the role of education, their attempt to give satisfying positive encouragement as much as they could according to their economic cultural level, their creation of a helpful home environment by motivating siblings who are older and more educated to share in helping their younger siblings, in providing them with experiences and information and by rewarding them; their asking siblings to further help to create a motivating environment for achievement by providing some books, all created a positive environment in the family in which everyone had a positive role to play according to his or her ability. This in turn helped Salma to attain high achievement. This agrees with Leung (1993) who found that parental valuing and concern for schoolwork and positive feelings about good school performance were found to correlate positively with adolescents' attitudes toward schoolwork. In addition, it was clear that Salma's father by seeking to acquire new experiences and new information by reading and educating himself provided him with important information which had a clear effect on his children's performance. His example and his behaviour instilled self-confidence in his children. He also acknowledged the importance of not using beating as a means punishment and of providing books and information and quietness for home study. Through such attitudes and behaviour Salma's father helped his child to achieve. Both Ammar's and Salma's families showed an interest in spending enough time with their children. In spite of Ammar's father's busy life he was interested in organising Ammar's time. In addition, Ammar's mother spent a great deal of time with her children and both parents helped to solve their children's problems by providing them with clarifying information. They also shared their hobbies. Salma's parents' interest in time spent with their daughter was not less than Ammar's parents' interest. In spite of their low educational cultural level they had a clear role in affecting their daughter's achievement.

This was represented by Salma's father helping her to recite the Quran as much as he could according to his abilities, by supervising her doing homework and by giving continual encouragement. This participation had a role in motivating her to study hard. Salma's positive feelings about her father's help provided her with a warm motivated environment which she could increase her performance. Salma's mother had a role too in motivating her children by giving them enough time and stimulating questions. In addition to interest in the quality and quantity of time spent with Ammar, Ammar's parents visited Ammar's school to ascertain his school problems and share with the school in putting forward solutions. In addition, Salma's parents were interested in cooperating with the school in order to benefit from the school's knowledge about teaching so that they could help their children. This helped Salma to study hard and to attain high achievement.

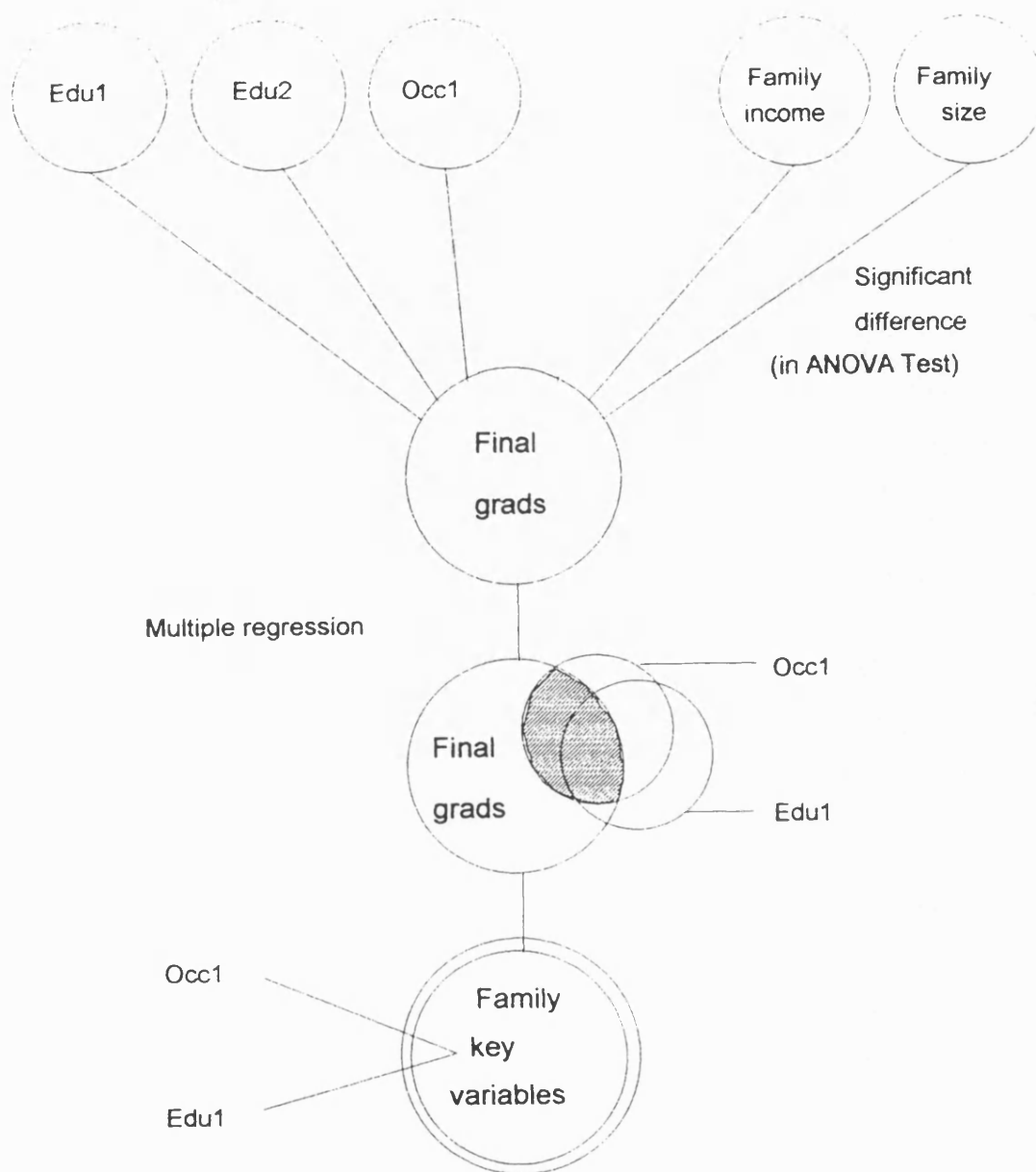
Two further case studies, of Salman and Yasmene, show similar low achievement but again with different family backgrounds. Although there is a difference between the two environments with regard to educational-cultural level, they are similar in many other aspects such as, the weak relationship between the mother and the father inside the family (even though the reasons for that weakness were different between the two families). In Salman's family's case the parents' weak relationship was as a result of the eastern tradition which says that it is the father only who should make decisions regarding any problems inside the family; this mean that the mother had no opinion about anything, even if the father's decision was wrong. In Yasmene's family's case the reasons were due to the fact that the father was usually very busy and left all domestic responsibility to his wife. This led to a low understanding, poor cooperation and lack of opinion exchange between them. This weakened parental relationship in the two cases had a negative reflection on the family and had a clear effect on both Salman's and Yasmene's achievement.

The weakness of the spouse relationship, their low understanding of each other and the low family stability had a negative effect on life inside the two families and therefore on the role of the parents, parental involvement and on the parent's encouragement of their children with regard to school. In the case of Salman's family the father's preoccupation in social matters, the mother's permanent preoccupation with a large family and her low educational cultural level all prevented the parents from organising Salman's time, discussing his school problems and from being interested in cooperating with their son's schooling. In Yasmene's case the high educational cultural level of her parents was only expressed by satisfying all the material needs of the children and did not mean that they acted positively in other ways. This lack was expressed as low positive encouragement and low interaction inside the family and was a result of the parents busy schedules. In the two cases it was clear that being busy in other life matters and low family stability led to a negative family environment. Neither Salman's nor Yasmene's family spent enough time on their children's homework; they did not encourage them, or know about their friends and they did not share their children's hobbies, which might have reflected positively on their children's achievement and which might have created a communication channel between the parents and their children. Instead what appeared was a weak relationship between both Salman and Yasmene with their families due to the weak contact between them.

In conclusion, it was clear from studying the four cases that the existence of educational-cultural factor in the family has a clear and assistant role in a motivating home environment. But this factor is only subsidiary and needs the existence of the family stability inside the family, parental involvement in all aspects inside the home, interest in the role of education and interest in the quality and quantity of time spent, to positively affect the children's achievement. High achievement often result from the existence of family stability, interest in education, giving enough time for children, and high ambition

of the family, even if the high educational- cultural factor is not in existence as was the case in Salma's family. On the other hand, the weakness of family stability, lack of parents' involvement and not spending time with children were negative influences and usually caused the children to have low achievement, even if the high- educational cultural level of the parents exists, as happened in Yasmene's case (see Figure 9.4 ). These findings are supported by Kellagham et al (1993), Henderson & Berla (1994) and Keith & Keith (1993) who found that what is important for children's development is not so much what parents are as what they do.

The previous conclusions showed that in spite of the differences between the Kuwait society and other countries societies, the results agree with those of Smith and Cheung's (1986) and Lockheed et (1989) carried out in developing countries, and also agrees with results from industrial countries' results as indicated by Kellagham et al (1993) which confirm the relationships between family variables and school performance. The agreement between our research results, the industrial countries' results and some developing countries' results concurred on the importance of the Kuwaiti family's in affecting their children.



Edu1: Education level of father  
Edu2: Education level of mother

Occ1: Occupation level of father

**Figure 9.1**

**A model of the effect of specified socio-economic variables and educational performance based on Kuwait data.**

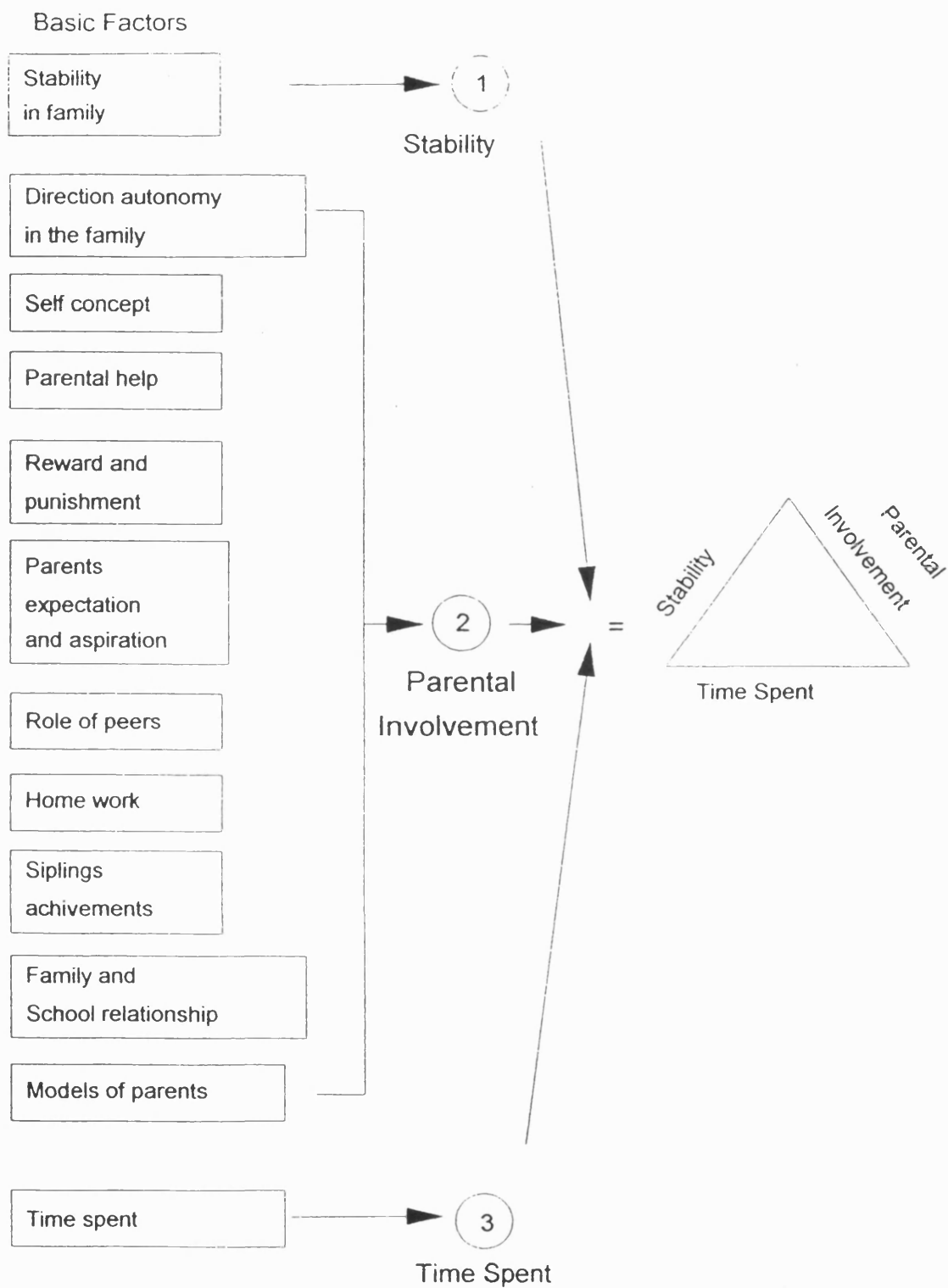
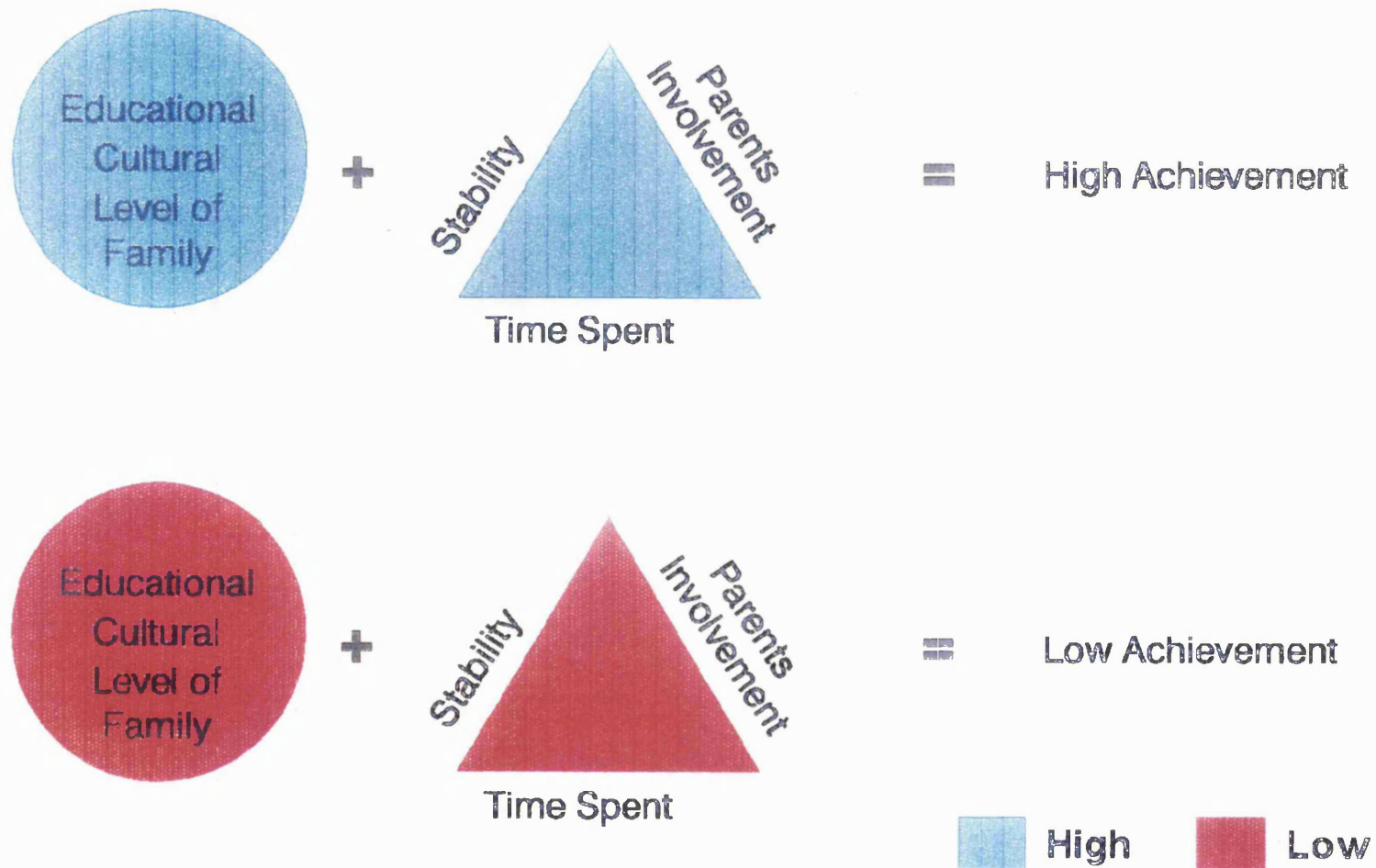


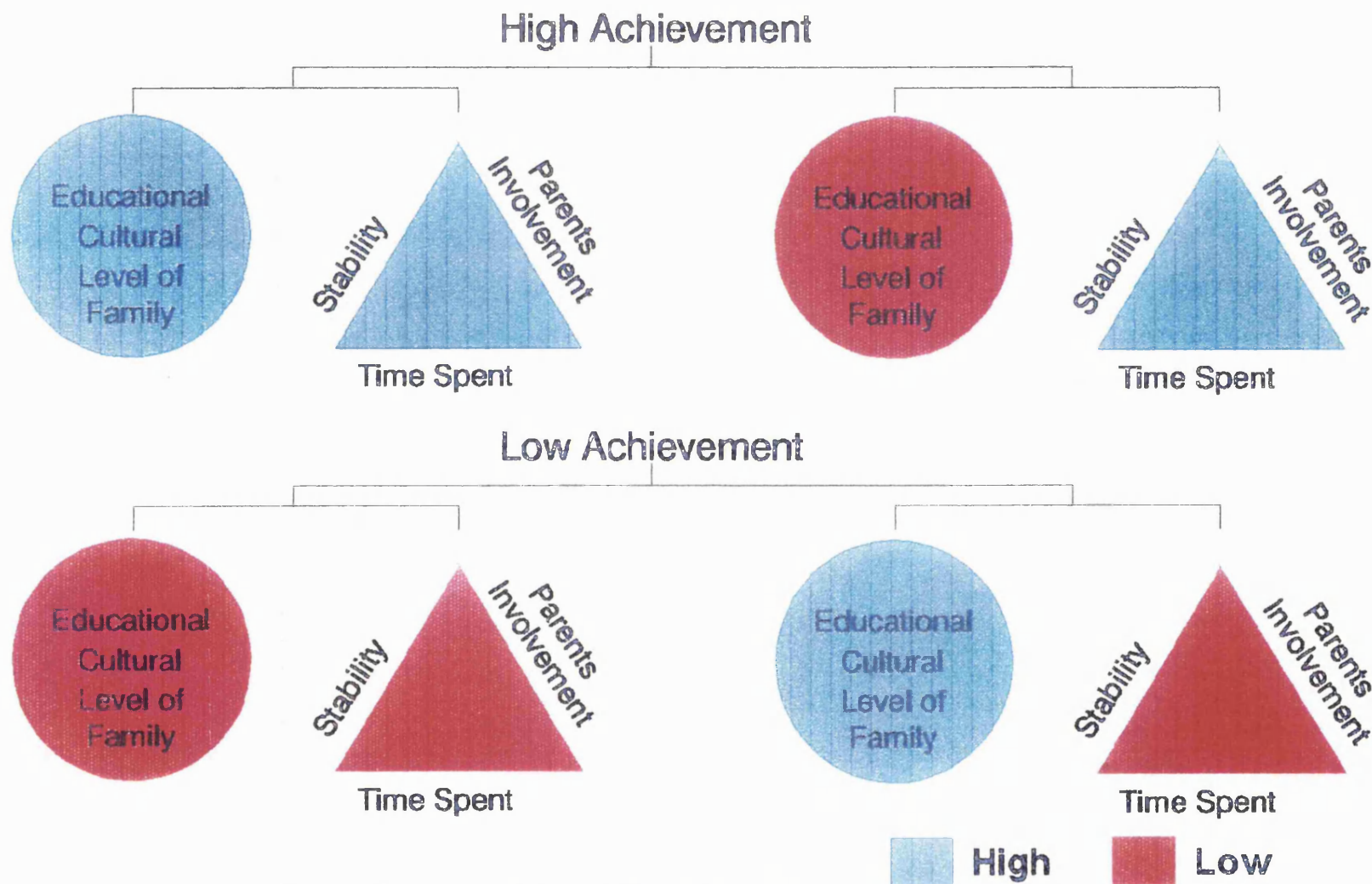
Figure 9.2

A model of factors influencing educational performance in Kuwait intermediate schools.



**Figure 9.3** An explanatory model of Educational Achievement derived from the interview sample.





**Figure 9.4** A model explaining the deviant cases in the analysis of the relationship between SES and educational achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

#### **10.1 Introduction:**

This chapter will outline the principal points raised in this study in terms of the study's purpose, the variables and the procedure used in collecting and analyzing the data required. It will provide, in addition, the general propositions derived from the study.

#### **10.2 Summary**

As a direct result of the production of oil in Kuwait, changes have taken place in most aspects of Kuwaiti life. In particular the infrastructure of Kuwaiti society has been the subject of significant change. That is to say, some new sectors and social classes have emerged.

The researcher noticed from his experiences as a teacher in Kuwait and from his visits to both male and female intermediate schools in Kuwait that pupils coming from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds tended to have different levels of educational achievement. Information gained from the pilot study and the literature review for this present study indicated that the occupational level of the father, the occupational level of the mother, the educational level of father, the educational level of mother, the family size, the family income, the nature of the relationship between the father and the mother, marital status of parents, the relationship between the parents and their children, the nature of home involvement, the influence of the peers and siblings and ordinal position of the child, the nature of parents' involvement and support inside and outside the home, parents' aspirations and expectations and the relationship between the home and the school were all strongly correlated with educational attainment, and could be considered as the most important factors affecting the pupils' educational achievement in

intermediate schools in Kuwait. However, at the same time the researcher found ‘deviant’ cases in which the parents had a high social economic level but their children had low achievement, and in which the parents had a low socio-economic level but the children had high achievement. These deviations from the main findings suggested that research using qualitative methods in the main study be done in more depth in order to explain the relationship between the socio-economic factors and pupils' educational achievement. The researcher decided to use statistical techniques as a part of the study to find the key variables.

In this study, the research questions were as follows:

- Are there any differences in pupils' achievement at the intermediate level in Kuwait in relation to:
  - \* occupational level of father?
  - \* occupational level of mother?
  - \* educational level of father?
  - \* educational level of mother?
  - \* family size?
  - \* family income?
- From the above, which are the key variables that affect pupils' achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait? And, how do these key variables affect lifestyle
- What kind of lifestyles exists inside the pupils' families? In particular:
  - \* What is the relationship between the parents and their children? And how do they treat their children?
  - \* What kind of atmosphere and environment do the children live in at home?
  - \* What kind of supervision do the parents use inside and outside the home?
  - \* What is the relationship between the father and the mother in the home?

- \* According to the parents, what kind of relationship exists between the parents and the school?
- What kind of methods do schools use in communicating with parents?
- With regard to the deviant cases, what could explain the fact that families of high social economic level had low achieving children and vice versa?
- According to parents, teachers, and social specialists, what is the best way to reduce the number of low achieving pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait?
- Although the study's focus is on the relationship between socio-economic factors and educational achievement it will be important to establish that there are not strong **school effects**. The data on educational achievement will be scrutinised on a school by school basis to determine the range of inter-school differences.

The samples in the main study were: (a) third grade intermediate school pupils (male and female) in the State of Kuwait; (b) parents of pupils in intermediate schools in Kuwait; (c) teachers and social specialists of intermediate schools in Kuwait.

As previously mentioned, the data was collected in the five governorates, Al-Assemah, Al-Farwaniya, Al-Ahmadi, Al-Jahra and Hawali. These governorates in general cover the whole of Kuwaiti society in terms of most aspects of life. From each governorate the researcher randomly chose two regions. From the ten regions, taken from the main five governorates mentioned, 20 intermediate schools were chosen randomly, 2 schools from each region (one male and one female). From each school the researcher randomly chose one class. Each class consisted of 29-32 pupils approximately. The total number of pupils under investigation in the 20 schools was 601 pupils (297 male and 304 female). The total number of pupils in the intermediate schools in Kuwait is 16,562 (males and females only). The students' final marks were taken from their school records in the third grade. In order to determine the high and low achievers the researcher depended on the

classification done by the Ministry of Education in Kuwait as regards educational achievement in intermediate stage. High achievement was a score of between 561 and 600 while low was 340 and below.

Pupil questionnaires were based on information collected from the pupils' school records. The following procedure was followed to obtain accurate information from the main sample (601 pupils). Interview, (1,2,3 and 4) ( see Appendixes B, C, D) were undertaken by the researcher in homes and schools. These interviews were conducted with a sample of:

- \* twenty parents and twenty of their children( ten from high achievement ( one male and one female from each governorates),and ten from low achievement (one male and one female from each governorates)).
- \* ten teachers ( one male and one female from each governorates).
- \* ten social specialists ( one male and one female from each governorates).

These interviews also included questions that were used to provide supplementary information from the study.

In addition, from the main sample the researcher also chose four case studies: two students from the high achievement level who had different qualities of home life, and two students from low educational achievement levels who also had different qualities of home life.

The data related to the pupils' questionnaire was statistically analyzed using a computer program based on SPSS.

### **10.3 Conclusions**

It has become less fashionable to examine the effects of socio-economic factors on educational achievement, at least in a discipline like sociology. However, we must note

that this 'old fashioned' question still remains very much part of the political agenda in the Western world. In Western societies two theoretical positions push in the opposite direction. The first concerns 'reproduction theory' represented by theorists like Bourdieu (1977); the second concerns the work of the 'school effectiveness' movement. Neither of these two positions seems to have much explanatory power in the case of Kuwait. The structure of Kuwaiti society is much influenced by its huge oil wealth and its desire to expand into a modern industrial society. It wishes to do this in the context of remaining an Islamic, Arab society. Its 'solution' is familiar in the West - the use of immigrant labour. The scale of this 'solution' produces a 'strange' society however. The tightly knit, **minority** Kuwaiti Nationals have constructed a state of which only they are full citizens. The education system of the immigrant worker population is quite separate. In this situation a credible case can be made out for arguing that the Kuwaiti education system attempts to **reproduce** its ethnic, cultural and religious dominance for all **its** citizens. It is thus important for the system that all Kuwaitis perform as well as possible in the education system.

Although some of the factors predicted by reproduction theory are present in data on educational achievement and social mobility i.e. a tendency for the occupational elite to reproduce itself partly through educational performance, the picture of the whole is much complicated by the 'dual' nature of the population. Furthermore, some of the usual indicators do not appear to be present. For example, the cultural superiority embedded in language which usually produces wider differences in performance between the social classes in language cf. Bernstein (1961,1972) does not appear to be present in Kuwait. There are, for example, no significant differences between children's performance in Arabic (the language of Kuwait) and Mathematics.

Finally, the data on school effects is itself significant. It is common in Western countries for there to be significant school effects, particularly in the UK and US, but inspection of the data presented in the thesis shows very little school effect i.e. the inter-school differences are very narrow. This is much more like the pattern to be found in Asian countries Reynolds et al (1995).

For all the above reasons it seems perfectly legitimate, both theoretically and in the political context of Kuwait, to search for explanations of differential educational performances in intermediate schools outside of the educational system. This study seems to show that social class has significant explanatory power- the sons and daughters of the members of the traditional society, largely occupying modest jobs perform poorly; whilst the sons and daughters of those who are very much part of the modernising process, perform much better.

After analyzing the findings, several conclusions were drawn.

- \* First, by using means, standard deviation and ANOVA test, significant differences with regard to the occupational level of father, educational level of father, educational level of mother, family size and family income were found among the students in terms of their mean achievement in intermediate schools. However the effect of the occupational level of mother on the pupils' achievement was not apparent. On the other hand, the results showed that there was no significant relationship between educational achievement of the students and the school they attended.

- \* Second, by using The Multiple Regression Test and using Step Wise, we found that the occupational and the educational level of the father is considered one of the most important factors that affect children's achievement in Kuwait.

\* Third, interviews with high and low achieving groups of both parents and children showed that there were a large number of general differences between which influence educational achievement. Here it can be seen that the level of family stability is considered the most important factor and is therefore, the first main factor of interest. Other factors come under the umbrella of the second main factor which is parents' involvement and interest in education. The third main factor of importance is time spent together. These three factors form a triangle showing that the Kuwaiti family has a clear influence on the children's' achievement.

\* Fourth, the interviews showed that the fathers' educational cultural level has an effect on the previously named factors, namely, stability, involvement and time spent. This factor acts with the other main factors in creating a positive environment for children to reach high achievement. Thus, it can be said that there is a kind of integration between the educational cultural factor and the main previous factors.

\* Fifth, the interviews with teachers and social specialists indicated the ongoing difficulties in communicating with the parents of low achievers. Furthermore, the interviews in the school showed the teachers' failure in using students' files to understand the socio- economic conditions of the students.

\* Sixth, the case studies confirmed the effect of the educational- cultural factor of the parents on the triangulated factors ( family stability, parents' involvement and interest in education , the quality and quantity of time spent) in affecting the home environment and thus in affecting the children's behaviour and achievement inside the family. On the other hand, the deviant cases showed that the existence of the triangulation factors with the existence of a low educational-cultural factor of the family may have a positive effect on achievement. However, the existence of a high educational-cultural factor of the family alongside low weight triangulated factors can still produce low achievement.



From the previous results of the research, the importance of the educational-cultural level of the family, especially the educational-cultural factor of the father and its active role with the triangulation factors could be observed. The existence of these two factors together helped to connect all members of the family and were represented by motivation, internal activities, exchange in experiences, cooperation and positive relationships between the family members. Such activity has a positive influence on the children's performance in school. This means that the previous factors acted together to enrich the internal environment of the family and provided it with the basic constituents that help to create a good environment in which children are more likely to obtain high achievement. The existence of triangulation factors ( stability, parental involvement, time spent) in the family with the existence of low educational-cultural factor of the family had a role in forming interactions, activities and positive relations between the mother and the father, the parents and the children, the children and their siblings and the children and their friends. In spite of the difficulties that the family face which were due to their low educational-cultural level, the relationships and stability between the family members created a suitable environment for the family to think about their children's future and their children's future careers. The fact that the parents showed interest in their children's education, were involved with their children, and spent enough time with the children, provided the kind of suitable environment which helped the children attain a high level of achievement. This was in spite of the weak direct help of their parents. It is possible that one element which may have helped surmount the difficulties due to the parents' low educational level was the parents' encouragement of competition between the children in the household. Hence this provided a motivating environment for the children. In contrast to the previous two situations the existence of only the high educational-cultural factor of the family with low triangulation factors did not give the required influence on the children's achievement. Instead, the low triangulation factors

led to lack of positive relationships within the family, a lack of exchange activities and lack of contact between the family members, all of which led to lack of interaction. Such lack of interaction may have weakened the educational-cultural role of the family which should have positively influenced family life and in turn should have influenced the children's achievement in school.

In general if we look at the research, we will find that it gives us a clear picture of the Kuwaiti family in its different situations. Although the previous studies carried out in Kuwait tried to study some socio-economic factors in connection with achievement, these studies did not achieve enough in-depth investigation into the problem and certainly did not get inside the family enough to analyse its internal situation and its ways of operating. This superficiality prevented the previous studies from reaching an all-inclusive picture of the families involved. In contrast, the present research concentrated on giving as clear a picture as possible of the internal situations of the family with the purpose of finding solutions and suggestions that could help ameliorate the low achievement problem. The researcher used both qualitative methods and statistical techniques in order to benefit from each of them. This combination permitted the formation of a holistic picture of the subject and in turn helped in forming organised results.

In order to achieve his results, the researcher used several instruments: questionnaires, in-depth interviews and case studies. And this was done in order to obtain more reliability and more validity for the situation and the results. The various methods used in the research include taking information from more than one source (students, parents, teachers, social specialists and friends), using methods and forms of communication which elicited information from the participants, applying validity and reliability tests in constructing, applying and analysing the research instruments. The results produced not

only seen consistent with other research but seem to make sense to the participants in the research. These considerations contributed to the attainment of results that are close to reality as expressed by the students, the parents, the teachers, and the social specialists. One of the research strengths is that the research gives a real picture of the families. It is hoped that this experience will help researchers in the future to gain access to target groups and deal with them easily, while maintaining regard for the social traditions in Kuwaiti Society.

If we look at the research we will find that there are two problematic areas in the research. The first was some of the fathers not allowing their wives to speak, a point which was obvious during case study No 3 “Salman”. The second was the lack of time spent with the family (only ten to eleven hours approximately was spent with each family): Both of these problems were due to family traditions. With regard to the first point, this situation hampered the researcher in benefiting from the mother’s opinion, which he had hoped would add other information. As a result of this experience the researcher suggests that in the future there should be some kind of cooperation between female researchers and male researchers in carrying out the study in order to increase and facilitate the acquisition of information, especially where women and society traditions are concerned.

Our research results suggest two policy directions for dealing with low achievement in intermediate schools in Kuwait: The first is for the long term, the effects of which may not appear immediately. It is to open more illiteracy centers and to find intensive programmes that are attractive to the citizen. We come to this policy conclusion following the clear results of our statistical analysis which shows that the educational level of the parents, particularly the father, is strongly correlated with educational achievement. Our qualitative analysis of life inside the home shows us how this factor

has its effect. Of course opening more such centres will not in itself "solve" the problem, as such strategies in other countries have clearly shown, but it will be an important first step. The policy will have to cope with the problem of persuading citizens to attend these centres. We believe that the findings of this research, which indicate that not only will the individual benefit from such a performance, but also will the children in the family, might be important in a society where the importance of the family and its children are still central. We also suggest that official incentives might be created to encourage the citizens to enroll in these centers. This could be done by planning to increase the citizen's salary as a bonus or as a reward given when the citizen succeeds at the end of every educational stage. Thus, these centers will help to improve the social situation of the citizens and will reduce the illiteracy in the country, and as a result will reduce the negative effects of the illiteracy on the home environment and on the children's achievement. Although this would be very expensive in fact it is necessary for Kuwaiti Society.

The second line of action is to try to change some behaviours and beliefs of the parents and to help them create a culture which helps them to sustain a stable environment for their children in the home. This policy line represents a crucial issue in this research. Although this policy may cost less money it needs concentrated efforts of many social and media institutions in the country such as, mosques, dewaniyas, social clubs, radio and TV and others. And this is in addition to the schools' efforts as represented by the help of the teachers and social specialists. These efforts should be made as active plans which clearly demonstrate their aims, which satisfy the Kuwaiti citizen's needs and which will have some immediate effects on the citizens. Such plans could include group discussions in the dewaniyas organised by the school. The organiser of these discussions should be a specialist in the field or one of the parents who has successfully worked with

his children to improve achievement. In the dewaniya, using discussion, in which normal dialogue is used between the people, may have more positive effects than a lecture that took place in the school itself could have. This is due to the fact that, as this research has shown, parents are often ashamed of speaking when they are inside the school environment. These discussions between the organiser and the parents will hopefully lead to a better relationship between the parents and their children and will also lead to a kind of openness among the parents, the children and the school. Moreover, Kuwait is a devout Islamic society. People in Kuwait take a great deal of notice of what the Imam says in mosques. Many uneducated people take their lead in their daily life from Islam. For this reason, raising issues like, parental stability, polygamy, parental involvement with their children and the importance of education for the people and the country's development on the part of the Imam in Friday Prayer and everyday prayer have a role in influencing the people's behaviour. Also, the discussion circles that take place in the mosques may have deeper effect on the people as it give a chance for them to ask for an explanation about everything concerning the above issues. If this could be reinforced by similar messages in the mass media, particularly through the broadcasting of dramas which are particularly popular with illiterates, then there is some chance in the special environment of Kuwait, that deep seated behaviour in the family might be changed.

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **11.1 Introduction**

In the following section the researcher will try to offer some recommendations to Kuwait educational authorities, schools and parents which derive from the research results and observations and which is hoped that will help solve the low achievement problem.

In view of the findings of this study, the researcher now offers the following recommendations. These recommendations could help educational authorities, teachers and social specialists, and parents to deal with problems that are faced in Kuwait.

#### **11.2 The Kuwaiti Educational Authorities**

The Kuwaiti Educational Authorities ( Kuwait Ministry of Education) recognizes that education is an important means for development. The researcher, therefore, recommends that the Kuwaiti authorities should learn from all educational studies, including this study, to improve its educational strategy, basing it on scientific principles. Based on this present study, the Kuwaiti authorities could promote educational development in the country by taking into account the importance of the socio-economic factors of the students in relation to educational achievement.

The most important aim, according to current educational policy in Kuwait, is education for all and as such the authorities should be interested in the following points:

Firstly, the authorities should take an interest in education in all its aspects and should provide education for everyone, especially for adults, both men and women. This can be achieved by making more efforts to eradicate illiteracy and by confirming the importance of education by publishing it in public places, including the mosques and Dewaniyas.

This involvement of everyone in education, especially of the adults, is important as

evidenced by the importance of the home culture on achievement. A comprehensive and carefully prepared plan to extend the base of literacy centers in the country would give positive results in the long term. At the same time it is important to be aware of and deal with the barriers to study that might prevent the illiterate people from enrolling in these centers.

Secondly, the authorities should invest more resources in studying the Kuwaiti family and its socio-economic problems since our results have shown clearly the importance of the influence of home factors on children's achievement. The authorities could acquire such information by encouraging researchers to study family problems and could benefit from this research by translating findings into action. The ministry should also recommended that schools to give more importance to any studies of the Kuwaiti family and its situation. At the same time, the ministry should increase the number of social specialists in the schools according to the number of the students in order to give pupils more opportunities to discuss their problems individually.

Thirdly, the authorities should help to support the support services to families, especially those families which are weak socially and economically, and this by cooperation with the responsible authorities. This would enable families to attain family stability.

Fourthly, the authorities should require the schools to pay more attention to updating and studying the children's files in order to ascertain the children's situation instead of depending on observation in the class. It is essential to add new items as they become known to the children's files in order to ensure sufficient and accurate information about the family as this may help the teachers and social specialists to observe the child more easily. The files must be treated as confidential in order to maintain confidence which will help the parents give information easily.

Fifthly, the authorities should encourage cooperation between the school and the home by the formation of parent-teacher associations. Schools should be obliged to form

assemblies for parents and teachers, and should be obliged to give comprehensive reports about the performance of those assemblies. This would allow anyone to see the positive points and negative points of these assemblies and thus would enable modification of their direction if needed. This would confirm the relationship between the home and the school and support the interactions between them.

Sixthly, the authorities should encourage schools to take more interest in communicating with families, especially in visiting the homes of low achieving students. Such visits would facilitate knowledge of their situation and make communication easier. As a result, a clearer picture of the home environment would be possible and would facilitate finding the right solutions for each student, thus affecting positively the children's achievement.

Seventhly, families need to be made aware of the factors in the family that affect their children's achievement, such as, the family disruption, lack of interest in education, and lack of enough time with the children. This may be achieved in many ways, for example, by explaining these factors in public newsletters, distributed freely in public places, or by requiring the schools to put on special programmes and seminars in order to inform the parents of these effects. In addition, the cooperation between the educational authorities and other national agencies, like the Ministry of Information (radio and TV) and Ministry of Religious Endowments (mosques), should be encouraged to help disseminate this information in an accessible way for the parents.

Eighthly, the authorities should require schools to exploit time after school hours to provide low achievers with special places for studying under the supervision of the teachers. Schools could also provide suitable equipment needed for hobbies and could provide some cultural stimuli. In this way, the children could satisfy what is difficult to satisfy in the home, especially when the family is large or has a low income.



Ninthly, the authorities should, along with other national agencies, promote the importance of the woman and her pioneer role as one of the most important members in the society. This should be done in order to improve the uneducated and low cultural standards of women and thereby enable them to do as much as they can in solving their children's problems. Such promotion could be done by attractive programmes on TV and so on.

### **11.3 The Schools**

In the view of the fact that the school is the closest educational institution to the family and the students, it is expected that it is the responsibility of the school to bridge, as much as possible, any lack in educational prospects caused by negative factors in the home environment. This can be accomplished by the following:

The schools in Kuwait should prepare educational programmes for the children, whether as basic activities inside the school or as booklets distributed to the children, in order to communicate concepts and experiences which may help them to perform well. For example, the schools could prepare standard timetables to help the child organize her/his time. They could provide the children with suitable ways for solving their school and family problems and they could give some additional lessons after school for children who are low achievers. Furthermore, the school should encourage better relations and cooperation between the children and the teachers and social specialist thus facilitating deeper understanding of the children's problems and helping to find solutions as soon as possible so that the children's' performance will not be affected.

The school should encourage specific activities during the parent- teachers meetings which confirm the cooperation between the school and the home and should make the basic aim of such meetings the child and her/his achievement.

The schools should conduct seminar programmes for parents at places that the parents like to attend like Dewaniyas and mosques. Meeting parents in such an environment, far from the ambiance of school, would help the parents relax more and should make them more receptive to seeing the importance of solving their children's problems. Dewaniyas and mosques could be considered as social centres that make the communication between the school and the parents easier, especially for the parents who feel embarrassed about visiting the school or who are busy at work. In addition, these programmes should include information indicating the effects of divorce and polygamy on children's achievement; the importance of cooperation between the mother and the father; the nature of the school system and its needs; the importance of building self-confidence in the child; the importance of providing a good quiet place for studying; the importance of rewarding the child who performs well, as well as indicating the negative effects of beating; the importance of high expectations and ambitions of the family; and the importance of the cooperation between the family and the school. It is important that the people who might lead such programmes should be specialists in this kind of work and should understand that the parents, as well, have their own experiences with their children. This would ensure the benefits of effective discussion and opinion exchange between the parents and the seminar leaders.

The schools should encourage the parents to become involved in the school according to their experience and availability even if this involvement were simply in order to investigate the possible communication between the school and the home. The schools should provide the parents with the school's future plans and ideas in order to ascertain their opinion on that. In this way the parents will feel that their role in discussing school matters is important. This will lead to better interaction between them and the school.

The schools should be required to make available meeting times with parents in the afternoon in order to give every parent a chance to attend. Furthermore, schools should

allow parents to visit the school anytime they want, which would lead to more cooperation from the parents.

The schools should facilitate the finding of a good place for the students to do their homework, especially in the case of those who do not have a good, quiet place in their homes to do their homework.

The school should satisfy all the students' needs of love, respect and belonging, especially for the low achievers, by encouraging and rewarding them even if they show only a small improvement as this will help them increase their achievement.

The school should play a greater role in becoming more informed about the students' home life to help in understanding the students' problems better. This can take place by using such modern ideas as field visits and then providing suitable advice to the family which might allow the students' problems to be dealt with easily so as to limit the effect of such problems. The student then would have a much better opportunity to perform well.

The school should carefully plan its programmes and activities in order to satisfy its aims, whether internal or external. Such planning should depend on a scientific base, for example scientific research results, so as to help the school focus clearly on what is needed. This will benefit both the school and the society in general and also save the effort time and money of the country.

#### **11.4 Parents**

In view of the fact that the parents are the focus of the socio-economic factors which influence educational achievement, it can be expected that their part in our recommendations is very important.

Acquiring education as education has a big role in the life and as it affects the children and the environment is important concept. This concept needs to be communicated to

those wives who are uneducated as their lack of education affects the home environment and affects the children's achievement.

Parents need to become interested in providing the students with general cultural stimuli and should become aware of new ideas or equipment which could serve them and facilitate them in dealing with their children inside the home. This could be encouraged by helping parents to become familiar with all the different ideas available to them according to their educational and cultural levels. They could acquire this information from the TV and broadcasting which offers specialized educational programmes or they could read about the new ideas in books.

Interest in the internal activities inside the home is very important. However, parents might not see this as being as necessary as our research has shown. Thus, they need to become aware of the effects of the family situation on the children's behavior and their personalities and in turn their educational achievement. They need to recognize the importance of respecting the children's personality, building self-confidence from a young age, listening to the children, sharing their hobbies, using rewards, discussing their problems, observing their homework and showing happiness to them and others.

The parents should not feel conceited about their own high educational cultural level and simply try to satisfy their children's material needs, such as a separate room and facilities for studying. Although such material provision does benefit children, they do not provide enough benefit to the children if there is no interaction and harmony between the parents and the children.

Parents should organize the children's time as much as they can in order to give the children enough time to participate in the whole range of activities useful to them.

Parents should comply with the school's requests to discuss progress as the information exchanged in such situations will usually benefit the children. Thus the school could provide the parents with latest developments and could demonstrate to them the family

factors that have a basic role in affecting the children's achievement, such as family stability, parental involvement and interest in education which help to form a suitable environment for their children inside the home. The parents should provide the school with all the beneficial information that may facilitate solving the children's problems and help them attain high achievement.

The previous recommendations and suggestions for the Kuwaiti authorities, the schools and the parents, carried out appropriately, should be helpful in improving the situation in the home, especially in the case of the low achievers' families. This improved family environment will benefit the children positively and improve their performance. Thus the number of low achieving students in the intermediate schools in Kuwait will be reduced and this will improve the overall effectiveness of education in the country.

Further studies are recommended by the researcher in the following areas. Since the present study included just the intermediate schools, another study for secondary schools is required in order to make comparison with our results. In addition, the cooperation between the school and the home, as it is considered to be one of the most important factors, should be researched in more depth in order to ascertain more precisely the nature of the school's responsibilities and the role of the parents' meetings and others. Other studies in the cognitive sphere are suggested to measure the intellectual processes of the student in order to discover differences among them in terms of educational achievement in schools. Research into these aspects will definitely provide new information that can positively influence education in Kuwait.

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## **APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX (A)

### Student Questionnaire Information Sheet

For Office use only

1- Student Name

1 

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|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|

Parent Tel. No.

Office

Home

2- School's Name

2 

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3- Father's Occupation

3 

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4- Mother's Occupation

4 

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5- Father's Educational Level

5 

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|  |
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1- No education (illiterate)

2- Read and write

3- Primary education

4- Intermediate education

5- Secondary education

6- Diploma

7- Graduate and Post-graduate

6- Mother's Educational Level

6 

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1- No education (illiterate)

2- Read and write

3- Primary education

**APPENDIX (A)** **continued**

4- Intermediate education

5- Secondary education

6- Diploma

7- Graduate and Post-graduate

7- Family Size (No. of Brothers and Sisters)

7

8- Family Monthly Income

8

9- The Final Grades at the end of the Year

9



## APPENDIX A

### استبيان الطلبة (ورقة المعلومات)

لاستخدام المكتب

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١- اسم الطالب

رقم تليفون ولي الامر

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| المكتب |  |
| المنزل |  |

٢- اسم المدرسة

٣- وظيفة الاب

٤- وظيفة الام

٥- مستوى تعليم الاب

١- غير متعلم (امى)

٢- يقرأ ويكتب

٣- تعليم ابتدائي

٤- تعليم متوسط

٥- تعليم ثانوى

٦- دبلوم

٧- تعليم جامعى و على

٦- مستوى تعليم الام

١- غير متعلم (امى)

٢- يقرأ ويكتب

٣- تعليم ابتدائي

٤- تعليم متوسط

٥- تعليم ثانوى

٦- دبلوم

٧- تعليم جامعى و على

## APPENDIX A

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تابع

٧- حجم الاسرة ( عدد الاخوان والاخوات )

٨- دخل الاسرة الشهري

٩- درجة آخر العام للطالب

## **APPENDIX (B)**

### **Interview (2) with the Students**

The main purpose of interview is to investigate the lifestyle of pupils, families in intermediate schools in Kuwait.

1- Do your parents listen to what you say about schooling?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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2- How important is it for your parents that you get good marks in school?

1. important
2. fairly important
3. not important
4. they don't care

## **APPENDIX B**

**Please explain**

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**3- Do your parents ask questions about your school work and homework?**

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

**Please explain**

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**4- How important is it for your parents that you complete your homework before you  
play (social activities) or watch TV?**

## APPENDIX B

1. important
2. fairly important
3. not important
4. they don't care

Please explain

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5- Do your parents make sure that you finish your homework?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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## **APPENDIX B**

**6- Do you have a fixed place to do your homework?**

1. Yes
2. No

**If Yes where?**

.....

**If No why?**

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**7- Do you ask your parents for advice about things in your school work?**

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

**Please explain**

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**8- Do your parents spend time with your homework?**

## **APPENDIX B**

1. Yes
2. No
3. some times

If Yes or some times how much time they usually spend with your homework?

1. more than an hour
2. an hour
3. about half an hour
4. about 15 minutes
5. about 10 minutes
6. about five minutes

Please explain

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9- Do your parents give any reward to you, if you do well in school?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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## APPENDIX B

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10- How do your parents reward you for doing well in school?

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11- Do your parents punish you if you do badly in school?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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12- How do your parents punish you if they use the punishment?



## APPENDIX B

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13- Do your parents tell you that they are happy if you do well in school test?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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14- Do your parents talk with you about your plans for future career?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

• Please explain

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## APPENDIX B

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15- Does the family have the following?

- library
- books (study books, text books)
- magazines
- newspapers
- computer
- video cassette recorder

Please explain

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16- Do your parents encourage you to read books other than school books?

1. Yes
2. No
3. some times

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please explain

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**APPENDIX B**

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17- Do you share a bedroom with other people?

- sleep with more than three brothers or sisters
- sleep with three brothers or sisters
- sleep with one brother or sister
- sleep alone
- sleep with others

18- Do you feel easy talking to teachers?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Some times

Please explain

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19- Do you feel easy talking to social specialists?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

## APPENDIX B

### 3. Some times

Please explain

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20- How would you describe your relationship with your parents?

(1) father:

| happy |   |   |   |   | unhappy |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---------|
| 5     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |         |

(2) mother

| happy |   |   |   |   | unhappy |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---------|
| 5     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |         |

Please explain

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## APPENDIX B

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21- If you have a problem you need to talk over with some, to whom do you go most of time?

|        |        |              |        |         |         |        |                 |        |
|--------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|-----------------|--------|
| father | mother | both parents | friend | teacher | brother | sister | other relatives | others |
|--------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|-----------------|--------|

If other relatives or other please specify who.

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22- A. Which relative has helped and encouraged you the most in your education? (put an X in one).

|        |        |              |        |         |         |        |                |       |        |
|--------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|----------------|-------|--------|
| father | mother | both parents | friend | teacher | brother | sister | other relative | other | nobody |
|--------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|----------------|-------|--------|

If other relatives or other please specify who.

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B. How and in what ways has he or she helped and encouraged you?

**APPENDIX B**

please explain

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23- How much schooling do you want to have?

1. finish intermediate school only.
2. finish secondary school only.
3. get Diploma from College.
4. get a Degree from University.
5. get higher education than the first degree

please explain

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24- At what time do you normally go to bed on a weak night?

1. before 9
2. about 9.30
3. about 10

**APPENDIX B**

- 4. about 11
- 5. about 12
- 6. after 12

please explain

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25- How do you normally spend your time after school?

- 1. play outside the home
- 2. watch TV
- 3. read books/ magazines/ newspapers/
- 4. play inside the home
- 5. other

please explain

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26- Are most of your friends from:

**APPENDIX B**

- 1. successful students
- 2. repeating students

please explain

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27- Do your parents intervene in choosing your friends?

- 1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

please explain

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28- Do you pursue any hobby outside the school?



## APPENDIX B

1. Yes
2. No

In case of Yes what is this hobby?

please explain

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29- Do your parents agree with your hobby?

1. agree
2. disagree
3. they don't care

please explain

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30- Do any of your brothers or sisters have low achievement?

**APPENDIX B**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

please explain

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31- Do you receive respect inside your house?

- 1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

please explain

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## APPENDIX B

32- Number of children in the family in order of:

age

sex

education

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



## APPENDIX B

٣- هل يسالك ولى أمرك عن أعمالك وواجباتك المدرسية ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الأحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٤- ما مدى الأهمية بالنسبة لولى أمرك أن تستكمل واجباتك المدرسية

بل اللعب أو مشاهدة التلفاز ؟

١- مهم جدا

٢- مهم

٣- غير مهم

٤- لا أهتم

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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## APPENDIX B

٥- هل يتأكد ولي أمرك أنك انتهيت من أداء واجباتك المدرسية ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الأحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٦- هل يتوفر لديك مكان مناسب لأداء واجباتك المدرسية ؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم أين .....

إذا كانت الإجابة بلا لماذا.....

٧- هل يساعدك ولي أمرك في أداء واجباتك المدرسية ؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الأحيان

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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## APPENDIX B

٨- هل تسال ولى أمرك أن ينصحك فى أشياء تتعلق بأعمالك المدرسية ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الأحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٩- هل يقضى ولى أمرك وقت معين مع واجباتك المدرسية ؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الأحيان

إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم أو بعض الأحيان ، كم من الوقت يقضى ولى

أمرك عادة مع واجباتك المدرسية ؟

١- أكثر من ساعة واحدة

٢- ساعة واحدة

٣- تقريبا نصف ساعة

٤- تقريبا ١٥ دقيقة

٥- تقريبا ١٠ دقائق

٦- تقريبا خمس دقائق

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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## APPENDIX B

١٠- هل يقدم لك ولي أمرك مكافأة معينة في حالة حصولك على درجات

عالية في المدرسة ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الأحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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١١- كيف يكافؤك ولي أمرك في حالة حصولك على درجات متدنية في

المدرسة ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الأحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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١٣- إذا كان ولي أمرك يستخدم أسلوب العقوبة ، كيف يعاقبك في حالة حصولك على درجات متدنية في المدرسة ؟

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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١٤- هل يخبرك ولي أمرك بأنه مسرور في حالة حصولك على درجات عالية في المدرسة ؟

- ١- دائما
- ٢- عادة
- ٣- بعض الأحيان
- ٤- نادرا
- ٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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APPENDIX B

١٥- هل يتحدث ولى أمرك معك عن خططك المستقبلية المتعلقة بالوظيفة ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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١٦- هل يشجعك ولى أمرك على قراءة الكتب العامة بالإضافة الى

الكتب المدرسية ؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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١٧- هل يتوفر لدى الأسرة الآتى :

- مكتبة
- كتب ( عامة ، دراسية )
- مجلات
- جرائد
- كمبيوتر
- فيديو

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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١٨- هل أنت مشترك مع أشخاص آخرين فى غرفة النوم ؟

- أنام مع أكثر من ٣ أشقاء أو شقيقات
- أنام مع ٣ أشقاء أو شقيقات
- أنام مع شقيق واحد أو شقيقة واحدة
- أنام لوحدى
- أنام مع أشخاص آخرين

١٩- هل تشعر بسهولة عندما تتحدث مع المدرسين ؟

- ١- دائما
- ٢- عادة
- ٣- بعض الأحيان
- ٤- نادرا
- ٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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## APPENDIX B

٢٠- هل تشعر بسهولة عندما تتحدث مع الأشخاص الاجتماعى ؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

الرجاء التوضيح.....  
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٢١- كيف تصف علاقتك مع ولى أمرك ؟

(١) ا لآب

| غير سعيدة |   |   |   |   | سعيدة |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|-------|
| 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |       |

(٢) ا لآم

| غير سعيدة |   |   |   |   | سعيدة |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|-------|
| 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |       |

الرجاء التوضيح.....  
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## APPENDIX B

٢٢- إذا كانت لديك مشكلة معينة وتحتاج لأحد أن تتكلم معه بخصوصها ،

س من تتوجه من هؤلاء التسعة :

|      |      |            |        |        |      |       |        |             |
|------|------|------------|--------|--------|------|-------|--------|-------------|
| الأب | الأم | الأم والأب | الصديق | المدرس | الأخ | الأخت | أقرباء | أشخاص آخرون |
|------|------|------------|--------|--------|------|-------|--------|-------------|

في حالة أقارب آخرين وأشخاص آخرين الرجاء التوضيح من هم بالضبط :

الرجاء التوضيح.....  
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 .....

٢٣- (١) أي من الأقارب يساعدك ويشجعك أكثر من دراستك ؟

( ضع علامة X على أحد هؤلاء المربعات )

|      |      |            |        |        |      |       |        |          |
|------|------|------------|--------|--------|------|-------|--------|----------|
| الأب | الأم | الأب والام | الصديق | المدرس | الأخ | الأخت | أقرباء | أشخاص أو |
|      |      |            |        |        |      |       | آخرون  | لا أحد   |

في حالة الأقارب أو أشخاص آخرون ، الرجاء التوضيح من هم بالضبط ؟

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح.....  
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(ب) كيف وما هي الطريقة التي يستخدمها ولي أمرك في مساعدتك  
تشجيعك على الدراسة ؟

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٢٤- ما المستوى التعليمي الذي ترغب أن تحصل عليه ؟

- ١- الحصول على تعليم متوسط فقط
- ٢- الحصول على تعليم ثانوي فقط
- ٣- الحصول على دبلوم من كلية معينة
- ٤- الحصول على الدرجة الجامعية
- ٥- الحصول على تعليم أعلى من الدرجة الجامعية

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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## APPENDIX B

٢٥- متى تذهب الى النوم عادة كل يوم ؟

١- قبل التاسعة

٢- تقريبا التاسعة

٣- تقريبا العاشرة

٤- تقريبا الحادية عشرة

٥- تقريبا الثانية عشرة

٦- بعد الثانية عشرة

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٢٦- كيف تقضى وقتك عادة بعد المدرسة ؟

١- اللعب خارج المنزل

٢- فى مشاهدة التلفاز

٣- فى قراءة الكتب والمجلات والجرائد

٤- فى اللعب داخل المنزل

٥- شيء آخر

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٢٧- هل أكثر أصدقائك من الناجحين أو غير الناجحين في مدارسهم ؟

١- طلبة ناجحين

٢- طلبة غير ناجحين

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٢٨- هل يتدخل ولي أمرك في اختيار أصدقائك ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الأحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٢٩- هل تمارس هواية معينة داخل أو خارج المدرسة ؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

- فى حالة الإجابة بنعم ما هى هذه الهواية ؟

الرجاء التوضيح.....  
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٣٠- هل يوافق ولى أمرك على هوايتك ؟

١- يوافق

٢- لا يوافق

٣- لا يهتم

الرجاء التوضيح.....  
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٣١- هل أحد اخوانك أو أخواتك لديه تحصيل ضعيف أو راسب فى دراسته

١- نعم

٢- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....  
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## APPENDIX B

٣٢- هل تتلقى الإحترام والتقدير داخل البيت ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الأحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

الرجاء التوضيح.....

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٣٣- عدد الإخوة والأخوات في الأسرة طبقا لـ

العمر النوع التعليم

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١٠-.....

## **APPENDIX (C)**

### **Interview 1 with the Parents**

The main purpose of the interview is to investigate:

- the lifestyle of pupils' families in intermediate schools in Kuwait in particular.
- the relationship between parents and their children and the treatment method which they use with them.
- the atmosphere and environment do children live at home.
- the supervision that parents follow inside and outside the home.
- the relationship between the family and school.

1- Do you listen to what your children say about schooling?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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## APPENDIX C

2- How important is it for you that your child gets high marks in school?

1. very important
2. fairly important
3. not important
4. I don't care

Please explain

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3- Do you ask your child questions about her/his school work and her/his homework?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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## APPENDIX C

4- How important do you think it is for you that your child complete her/his homework before she/he plays or watches TV?

1. very important
2. fairly important
3. not important
4. I don't care

Please explain

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5- Do you make sure that your child finish her/his homework?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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## APPENDIX C

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6- Does your child have a fixed place to do her/his homework?

1. Yes
2. No

If Yes where?

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If No please explain

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7- Does your child ask for your advice about things in her/his school work?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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## APPENDIX C

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8- Do you spend time with your child's homework?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Some times

If Yes or some times how much time do you spend with your child's homework?

1. more than an hour
2. an hour
3. about half an hour
4. about 15 minutes
5. about 10 minutes
6. about 5 minutes

Please explain

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9- Do you give any reward to your child for doing well in school?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

**APPENDIX C**

please explain

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10- If you reward your child, how do you reward him/her?

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11- Do you punish your child if he /she does badly in school?

- 1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

Please explain

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## APPENDIX C

12- How do you punish your child if you use the punishment?

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13- Do you tell your child that you are happy if he/she does well in school test?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

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14- Do you talk with your child about her/his plans for future career?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

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15- Do you know your child's friends?

1. Yes
2. No

Please explain

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16- Does the family have the following

- library
- books (study books, textbooks)
- magazines
- newspaper
- computer
- video cassette recorder

## **APPENDIX C**

Please explain

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17- Does your child share a bedroom with other people?

- sleep with more than three brothers or sisters
- sleep with three brothers or sisters
- sleep with one brother or sister
- sleep alone
- sleep with others

Please explain

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18- Do you share with your (wife, husband) in solving your child's school problems?

1. Yes
2. No
3. some times

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

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19- Did you or your wife (husband) visit your child's school and talk to her/his teacher  
last year?

1. Yes
2. No

Please explain

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20- Do you feel comfortable talking to the teacher?

1. Yes
2. No
3. some times

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

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21- Do you feel comfortable talking to the social specialist?

1. Yes
2. No
3. some times

Please explain

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22- How much schooling do you want your child to get?

- finish intermediate school only
- finish secondary school only
- get Diploma from College only
- get a degree from University only
- get higher education than the first degree

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

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23- What job do you want your child to have when he/she finish his/her education?

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24- How much schooling do you really think your child can achieve?

- finish intermediate school only
- finish secondary school only
- get Diploma from College only
- get a degree from University only
- get higher education than the first degree

Please explain

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## APPENDIX C

25- Number of children in the family in order of

|     | age | sex | education |
|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| 1.  |     |     |           |
| 2.  |     |     |           |
| 3.  |     |     |           |
| 4.  |     |     |           |
| 5.  |     |     |           |
| 6.  |     |     |           |
| 7.  |     |     |           |
| 8.  |     |     |           |
| 9.  |     |     |           |
| 10. |     |     |           |

26- Father's age

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27- Mother's age

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28- Family monthly income

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29- Social situation of parents

- parents living together
- parents separated
- the father married with other wife

## **APPENDIX C**

30- Birth order to the student

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31- Further description of the home.

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## **APPENDIX (C)**

### **Interview 1 with the Parents**

**[This is a summary transcript of an interview translated in English. It is not transcribed verbatim, in particular the interviewer's prompts and sub questions have been omitted.]**

The main purpose of the interview is to investigate:

- the lifestyle of pupils' families in intermediate schools in Kuwait in particular.
- the relationship between parents and their children and the treatment method which they use with them.
- the atmosphere and environment for children living at home.
- the supervision that parents follow inside and outside the home.
- the relationship between the family and school.

1- Do you listen to what your children say about schooling?

1. always
- \* 2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
5. never

Please explain

...I usually listen to Ahmed when he talks about his schooling and I usually spend lunch and the dinner time with my family in order to listen to my children. My wife does the same thing, especially when I am busy in my work and especially when she is available at home in the evening. That means that there is cooperation between me

## APPENDIX C

and my wife.....

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2- How important is it for you that your child gets high marks in school?

- \* 1. very important
- 2. fairly important
- 3. not important
- 4. I don't care

Please explain

....This point is not only important to me but also is one of my objectives in my life. I always hope to see my children getting high marks in school like their mother and I did when we were at school. For that reason I always do my best to help them and encourage them to reach a high achievement which considered one of my and their mother's objectives as I mentioned before.....

.....

3- Do you ask your child questions about her/his school work and her/his homework?

- \*1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

Please explain

....I am confident that Ahmed will do his homework but at the same time I always ask him about his homework in order to be close to him when he needs that and also in order to make sure about his performance in every subject.....

.....

## APPENDIX C

4- How important do you think it is for you that your child complete her/his homework before she/he plays or watches TV?

- \* 1. very important
- 2. fairly important
- 3. not important
- 4. I don't care

Please explain

.....His homework is very important to me and because of that I always help him to organize his time in which there is a time for playing, other time for watching TV, and another time for doing homework. This means that there is a division of time and I think this way of organizing his time may help Ahmed more to do his homework.....

5- Do you make sure that your child finish her/his homework?

- 1. always
- 2. usually
- \* 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

Please explain

....In fact I am confident in Ahmed and I know that he will finish his homework but some times I ask him if he has finished his homework or not in order to be satisfied with him.....

## APPENDIX C

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6- Does your child have a fixed place to do her/his homework?

- \*1. Yes
- 2. No

If Yes where?

....Ahmed has his own room to do his homework and it is provided with all that he needs to do his homework like a chair, desk, enough light and quietness.....

If No please explain

.....

.....

7- Does your child ask for your advice about things in her/his school work?

- \*1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

Please explain

....Ahmed always asks me about his schoolwork, especially in my free time and if I am not available at home he always asks his mother.....

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## APPENDIX C

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8- Do you spend time with your child's homework?

- \*1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Some times

If Yes or some times how much time do you spend with your child's homework?

- 1. more than an hour
- \* 2. an hour
- 3. about half an hour
- 4. about 15 minutes
- 5. about 10 minutes
- 6. about 5 minutes

Please explain

....I always help Ahmed with his homework and also I set aside four hours every day in my schedule, from 3 O'clock to 7 O'clock to discuss with my children anything they need to discuss.....

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9- Do you give any reward to your child for doing well in school?

- \*1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

## APPENDIX C

please explain

....I always reward Ahmed for doing well in school because I think this will motivate him to achieve more and make him feel that I am satisfied with him and which push him to improve his performance.....

.....

10- If you reward your child, how do you reward him/her?

....I give him a present and I promise him that I will take him to a trip in the summer to Cairo because he likes the different activities there and visiting pyramids.....

.....

11- Do you punish your child if he /she does badly in school?

1. always
2. usually
3. some times
4. seldom
- \*5. never

Please explain

....I don't use punishment, especially physical forms of punishment, with Ahmed and the rest of my children. I treat Ahmed as a friend. If there is a failure in his school work I always try to discuss with him the reasons for this failure and then we put forward some ideas which we think may help to solve this failure. Sometimes I leave him to apply these points himself under my supervision.....

## APPENDIX C

12- How do you punish your child if you use the punishment?

.....

.....

13- Do you tell your child that you are happy if he/she does well in school test?

- \*1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

Please explain

.....I feel happy when Ahmed does well in school tests and I always show him my happiness in order to encourage him to achieve more. In my opinion showing my children that I'm happy may motivate them to increase their performance.....

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14- Do you talk with your child about her/his plans for future career?

- \*1. always
- 2. usually
- 3. some times
- 4. seldom
- 5. never

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

.....Ahmed wants to be a doctor like his brother Khasan. In fact I always give the freedom of choice to all my children and with their mother always encourage their choice. Also, there is a continuing discussion between us and our children about their future career. We give them ideas about each job like a doctor's job, an engineer's job and so on. Also we explain to them the moral and material advantages of every job which help them to make the right choice.....

15- Do you know your child's friends?

- \*1. Yes
- 2. No

Please explain

.....I always try to find out Ahmed's friends, their families, and all about them. Also, I supervise him with his friends. In my opinion friendship may lead to success or to failure according to the quality of the friend.....

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16- Does the family have the following

- library
- \* - books (study books, textbooks)
- \* - magazines
- \* - newspaper
- \* - computer
- \* - video cassette recorder



## APPENDIX C

Please explain

....There are some books and textbooks on the shelves in the sitting room. There are some magazines like "Al Riyadi". Also I bring home all the main newspapers in Kuwait. There is a computer for my children and a video cassette recorder on which my children can see some educational programmes which I think is necessary to help the children to achieve more.....

.....

17- Does your child share a bedroom with other people?

- sleep with more than three brothers or sisters
- sleep with three brothers or sisters
- sleep with one brother or sister
- \*- sleep alone
- sleep with others

Please explain

....Ahmed sleeps alone. I think this helps him to do his homework in a quiet place.

.....

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18- Do you share with your (wife, husband) in solving your child's school problems?

- \*1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. some times

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

.....I always share my wife the solution of all my children's problems, especially schooling problems. This is in order to create a climate of cooperation in the family....

.....

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19- Did you or your wife (husband) visit your child's school and talk to her/his teacher last year?

- \*1. Yes
- 2. No

Please explain

.....I always visit Ahmed's school during the year to have an idea about Ahmed's performance and to give them any information they want to know about him. I think these visits are very important for exchanging opinions between the school and the parents and in my opinion they have a positive influence on the student's achievement.....

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20- Do you feel comfortable talking to the teacher?

- \*1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. some times

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

.....I feel comfortable about speaking with him and I feel acceptance with regard to my questions.....

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21- Do you feel comfortable talking to the social specialist?

- \*1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. some times

Please explain

.....I feel easy talking to him because I know that he wants my son's benefit and that he always do his best to improve my son's performance.....

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22- How much schooling do you want your child to get?

- finish intermediate school only
- finish secondary school only
- get Diploma from College only
- get a degree from University only
- \*- get higher education than the first degree

## APPENDIX C

Please explain

.....This is my aspiration for my children.....

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23- What job do you want your child to have when he/she finishes his/her education?

.....I hope he can be a high achiever and be a doctor.....

.....

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24- How much schooling do you really think your child can achieve?

- finish intermediate school only
- finish secondary school only
- get Diploma from College only
- get a degree from University only
- \*- get higher education than the first degree

Please explain

.....Because I think he can get it and I trust him to do it and at the same time we  
always encourage him to do it so I am sure that he will get it.....

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**APPENDIX C**

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25- Number of children in the family in order of

|     | age | sex    | education         |
|-----|-----|--------|-------------------|
| 1.  | 22  | male   | University degree |
| 2.  | 20  | female | University degree |
| 3.  |     |        |                   |
| 4.  |     |        |                   |
| 5.  |     |        |                   |
| 6.  |     |        |                   |
| 7.  |     |        |                   |
| 8.  |     |        |                   |
| 9.  |     |        |                   |
| 10. |     |        |                   |

26- Father's age

....50.....

27- Mother's age

....45.....

28- Family monthly income

....1400.K.D.....

## APPENDIX C

### 29- Social situation of parents

- \*- parents living together
- parents separated
- the father married with other wife

### 30- Birth order to the student

.....The third .....

### 31- Further description of the home.

.....The house is a villa and it contains two floors and four bedrooms. This means that everyone in the family has his own room. There is a garden and external buildings in the house that contains a special room for luxury toys for the family.....  
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APPENDIX C

مقابلة (١)

مع الوالدين

١- هل تسمع لما يقوله ابنك (ابنتك) عن دراسته في المدرسة ؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

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٢- ما مدى الاهمية بالنسبة لك في ان يحصل ابنك (ابنتك) على درجات عالية ؟

١- مهم جدا

٢- مهم

٣- غير مهم

٤- انا لا اهتم

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

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APPENDIX C

٣- هل تسال ابنك (ابنتك) عن واجباته المدرسية؟

- ١- دائما
- ٢- عادة
- ٣- بعض الاحيان
- ٤- نادرا
- ٥- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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٤- ما مدى الاهمية بالنسبة لك في ان يستكمل ابنك (ابنتك) واجباته المدرسية قبل اللعب او مشاهدة التلفاز؟

- ١- مهم جدا
- ٢- مهم
- ٣- غير مهم
- ٤- انا لا اهتم

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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٥- هل تتأكد ان ابنك (ابنتك) استكمل واجباته المدرسية؟

- ١- دائما
- ٢- عادة
- ٣- بعض الاحيان



APPENDIX C

٤ - نادرا

٥ - لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

٦ - هل يتوفر لدى ابنك (ابنتك) مكان مناسب لاداء واجباته المدرسية؟

١ - نعم

٢ - لا

اذا كان نعم اين

اذا كان لا لماذا

٧ - هل ابنك (ابنتك) يسالك النصيحة في اشياء تتعلق باعماله المدرسية؟

١ دائما

٢ - عادة

٣ - بعض الاحيان

٤ - نادرا

٥ - لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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## APPENDIX C

٨- هل تخصص وقت معين لواجبات ابنك (ابنتك) المدرسية؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- احيانا

اذا كان الاجابة بنعم او احيانا، كم من الوقت تقضيه في اداء واجبات ابنك (ابنتك) المدرسية؟

١- اكثر من ساعة واحدة

٢- ساعة واحدة

٣- تقريبا نصف ساعة

٤- تقريبا خمس عشرة دقيقة

٥- تقريبا عشر دقائق كل يوم

٦- تقريبا خمس دقائق

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

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٩- هل تقدم مكافاة معينة لابنك (لابنتك) في حالة حصوله على درجات عالية في المدرسة؟

١ دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

APPENDIX C

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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١٠- كيف تكافىء ابنك (ابنتك) في حالة حصوله على درجات عالية في المدرسة؟

الرجاء التوضيح

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١١- هل تعاقب ابنك (ابنتك) في حالة حصوله على درجات متدنية في المدرسة؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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١٢- اذا كنت تستخدم اسلوب العقاب فكيف تعاقب ابنك (ابنتك)؟

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**APPENDIX C**

١٣- هل تخبر ابنك (ابنتك) بانك مسرور في حالة حصوله على درجات عالية في المدرسة؟

- ١- دائما
- ٢- عادة
- ٣- بعض الاحيان
- ٤- نادرا
- ٥- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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١٤- هل تتناقش مع ابنك (ابنتك) عن خطته المستقبلية المتعلقة بالوظيفة؟

- ١- دائما
- ٢- عادة
- ٣- بعض الاحيان
- ٤- نادرا
- ٥- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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APPENDIX C

١٥- هل تعرف اصدقاء ابنك (ابنتك)؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

الرجاء التوضيح

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١٦- هل يتوفر لدى الاسرة الآتي:-

١- مكتبة

٢- كتب (عامّة، دراسية)

٣- مجلات

٤- جرائد

٥- كمبيوتر

٦- فيديو

الرجاء التوضيح

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١٧- هل ابنك (ابنتك) مشترك مع اشخاص آخرين في غرفة النوم؟

١- ينام مع أكثر من ٣ اشقاء او شقيقات

٢- ينام مع ٣ اشقاء او شقيقات

٣- ينام مع شقيق واحد او شقيقة

٤- ينام وحده

٥- ينام مع اشخاص آخرين

APPENDIX C

الرجاء التوضيح

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١٨- هل تشارك زوجتك (زوجك) في حل مشاكل ابنك (ابنتك) المدرسية؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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١٩- هل زرت او زوجتك مدرسة ابنك (ابنتك) وتحدثت مع مدرسه او مدرستها السنة الماضية؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

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٢٠- هل تشعر بسهولة عندما تتكلم مع المدرسين؟

١- نعم

APPENDIX C

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

٢١- هل تشعر بسهولة عندما تتكلم مع الاخصائي الاجتماعي؟

١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

٢٢- ما هو المستوى التعليمي الذي ترغب ان يحصل عليه ابنك (ابنتك)؟

١- الحصول على التعليم المتوسط فقط

٢- الحصول على التعليم الثانوي فقط

٣- الحصول على دبلوم من كلية معينة فقط

٤- الحصول على الدرجة الجامعية فقط

٥- الحصول على تعليم اعلى من الدرجة الجامعية

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

## APPENDIX C

٢٣- ما الوظيفة التي يرغب ابنك (ابنتك) ان يتوجه اليها بعد انتهائه من الدراسة؟

٢٤- ما هو المستوى التعليمي الذي تعتقد حقا ان ابنك (ابنتك) يستطيع الحصول عليه؟

١- الحصول على التعليم المتوسط فقط

٢- الحصول على التعليم الثانوي فقط

٣- الحصول على دبلوم من كلية معينة فقط

٤- الحصول على الدرجة الجامعية فقط

٥- الحصول على تعليم اعلى من الدرجة الجامعية

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

٢٥- عدد الاخوة في الاسرة طبقا ل

التعليم

النوع

العمر

١-

٢-

٣-

٤-



APPENDIX C

|       |                                   |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| ..... | -٥                                |
| ..... | -٦                                |
| ..... | -٧                                |
| ..... | -٨                                |
| ..... | -٩                                |
| ..... | -١٠                               |
| ..... | -٢٦ عمر الاب                      |
| ..... | -٢٧ عمر الام                      |
| ..... | -٢٨ دخل الاسرة الشهري             |
| ..... | -٢٩ الوضع الاجتماعي للأسرة        |
| ..... | ١- الام والاب يعيشون في منزل واحد |
| ..... | ٢- الام والاب منفصلين             |
| ..... | ٣- الاب متزوج من امرأة اخرى       |
| ..... | ٣٠- ترتيب الطالب بين اخوانه       |
| ..... | ٣١- معلومات تفصيلية عن المنزل     |
| ..... |                                   |
| ..... |                                   |
| ..... |                                   |

## APPENDIX C

مقابلة (١)

مع الوالدين

١- هل تسمع لما يقوله ابنك (ابنتك) عن دراسته في المدرسة ؟

١- دائما

\*٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

....انا عادة استمع الى احمد عندما يتكلم معي عن الدراسة، كما انني عادة اقضي وقت الغداء والعشاء مع اسرتي لكي استمع الى ابنائي في حين ان زوجتي تعمل نفس الشيء خاصة عند انشغالي في العمل وخاصة عند تواجدها في البيت مساء. بمعنى ان هناك تعاون بيني وبينها في ذلك.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

٢- ما مدى الاهمية بالنسبة لك في ان يحصل ابنك (ابنتك) على درجات عالية ؟

\*١- مهم جدا

٢- مهم

٣- غير مهم

٤- انا لا اهتم

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

....هذه النقطة ليست فقط مهمة بالنسبة لي ولكنها هي احدى امنياتني في الحياة. انا دائما اتمنى ان ارى ابنائي يحصلون على درجات عالية في المدرسة مثلي انا وامهم عندما كنا في المدرسة. ولهذا السبب انا دائما ابذل قصارى جهدي لكي اساعدهم واشجعهم على ذلك لتحقيق التحصيل العالي الذي يعتبر احد اهدافنا انا وامهم في الحياة  
كما ذكرت.....

## APPENDIX C

٣- هل تسال ابنك (ابنتك) عن واجباته المدرسية؟

\*١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

....انا واثق ان احمد سوف يؤدي واجباته ولكنني في نفس الوقت انا دائما احرص على سؤاله عن واجباته المدرسية لكي اكون قريب منه اذا احتاجني في ذلك وايضا لاطمئن على تحصيله ومدى تقدمه او تاخره في اي مادة.....

٤- ما مدى الاهمية بالنسبة لك في ان يستكمل ابنك (ابنتك) واجباته المدرسية قبل اللعب او مشاهدة التلفاز؟

\*١- مهم جدا

٢- مهم

٣- غير مهم

٤- انا لا اهتم

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

....واجباته المدرسية مهمة جدا بالنسبة لي لهذا انا دائما اساعده في تنظيم وقته فيوجد وقت مخصص للعب وآخر لمشاهدة التلفزيون والترفيه وآخر لاداء الواجب.. بمعنى ان هناك تقسيم لوقت احمد وان هذا التقسيم يساعد في اعتقادي على اعطاء كل جانب حقه.....

٥- هل تتأكد ان ابنك (ابنتك) استكمل واجباته المدرسية؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

\*٣- بعض الاحيان

## APPENDIX C

٤ - نادرا

٥ - لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

.... في الحقيقة انا واثق من احمد وانا اعرف انه سوف يستكمل واجباته المدرسية ولكني بعض الاحيان اساله عما اذا  
استكمل واجباته المدرسية ام لا وذلك للاطمئنان عليه.....

٦ - هل يتوفر لدى ابنك (ابنتك) مكان مناسب لاداء واجباته المدرسية؟

\* ١ - نعم

٢ - لا

اذا كان نعم اين.... احمد لديه غرفته الخاصة لاداء واجباته المدرسية فيها والغرفة مزودة بكل ما يحتاجه لاداء واجباته  
المدرسية فيها والتي نحرص على توفيرها لتحقيق الراحة له.....  
اذا كان لا لماذا.....

٧ - هل ابنك (ابنتك) يسالك النصيحة في اشياء تتعلق باعماله المدرسية؟

\* ١ - دائما

٢ - عادة

٣ - بعض الاحيان

٤ - نادرا

٥ - لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

.... أحمد دائما يسألني عن اعماله المدرسية خاصة في وقت فراغي واذا لم اكن متواجد في البيت هو دائما يسأل امه  
عن ذلك.....

## APPENDIX C

٨- هل تخصص وقت معين لواجبات ابنك (ابنتك) المدرسية؟

\*١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- احيانا

اذا كان الاجابة بنعم او احيانا، كم من الوقت تقضيه في اداء واجبات ابنك (ابنتك) المدرسية؟

\*١- أكثر من ساعة واحدة

٢- ساعة واحدة

٣- تقريبا نصف ساعة

٤- تقريبا خمس عشرة دقيقة

٥- تقريبا عشر دقائق كل يوم

٦- تقريبا خمس دقائق

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

...انا دائما اساعد احمد في اداء واجباته المدرسية كما انني في نفس الوقت اخصص اربعة ساعات يوميا في جدولتي من الساعة الثالثة وحتى الساعة السابعة لمناقشة كل ما يحتاجه ابنائي للمناقشة.....

٩- هل تقدم مكافأة معينة لابنك (لابنتك) في حالة حصوله على درجات عالية في المدرسة؟

\*١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

...أنا دائما اكافئ احمد عند حصوله على درجات عالية في المدرسة لانني اعتقد ان هذا سوف يحفزه لان ينجز اكثر ويجعله يشعر بانني راض عنه والذي يدفعه للعمل والجهد اكثر فاكثر.....

## APPENDIX C

١٠- كيف تكافئ ابنك (ابنتك) في حالة حصوله على درجات عالية في المدرسة؟

الرجاء التوضيح

...اعطيه هدية واعدته بان آخذه الى رحلة في الصيف وخاصة انه يحب القاهرة لتنوع الانشطة هناك ولزيارة  
الاهرامات هناك واماكن اخرى والتي تجعله سعيد.....

١١- هل تعاقب ابنك (ابنتك) في حالة حصوله على درجات متدنية في المدرسة؟

١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

\*٥- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

...انا لا استخدم اسلوب العقاب خاصة الضرب باليد مع احمد ومع كل ابنائي. انا اعامل احمد كأنه صديقي، اذا  
كان هناك رسوب في المدرسة انا دائما احاول ان اتناقش معه عن اسباب هذا الرسوب ثم نضع سويا بعض النقاط  
التي نعتقد انها ممكن ان تعالج هذا الرسوب. بعض الاحيان انا اترك احمد يضع هذه النقاط بنفسه ولكن تحت  
اشرافي.....

١٢- اذا كنت تستخدم اسلوب العقاب فكيف تعاقب ابنك (ابنتك)؟

١٣- هل تخبر ابنك (ابنتك) بانك مسرور في حالة حصوله على درجات عالية في المدرسة؟

\*١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

## APPENDIX C

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

انا اشعر بالسعادة عندما احمد يحصل على درجات عالية في المدرسة، وانا ايضا دائما اظهر لاحمد سعادتي بذلك لكي اشجعه على التحصيل العالي في اعتقادي ان توصيل السعادة للاولاد قد يشجعهم على زيادة المثابرة.....

.....

.....

١٤- هل تتناقش مع ابنك (ابنتك) عن خططه المستقبلية المتعلقة بالوظيفة؟

\*١- دائما

٢- عادة

٣- بعض الاحيان

٤- نادرا

٥- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

.... احمد يريد ان يصبح طبيبا كاخيه غسان، في الحقيقة انا دائما اعطي ابنائي حرية الاختيار في ذلك، كما انني دائما مع امهم نحاول ان نشجع هذا الاختيار، بالاضافة الى ذلك هناك دائما مناقشة مستمرة بيني وبين امهم عن المستقبل الوظيفي لابنائنا. فنقوم احيانا بشرح واعطاء فكرة عن طبيعة كل وظيفة مثلا وظيفة الدكتور ومميزاتها المادية والمعنوية والتي تساعد الاولاد على ان يكون اختيارهم صحيحا.....

.....

١٥- هل تعرف اصدقاء ابنك (ابنتك)؟

\*- نعم

٢- لا

الرجاء التوضيح

...أنا دائما احاول التعرف على اصدقاء احمد وعلى اسرهم وعلى كل ما يتعلق بهم. كما انني اشرف على هؤلاء الاصدقاء خلال تواجدهم مع احمد. في رأيي الصداقة قد تؤدي الى النجاح او الى السقوط على حسب نوعية الصديق.....

.....

## APPENDIX C

١٦- هل يتوفر لدى الاسرة الآتي:-

١- مكتبة

\*٢- كتب (عامة، دراسية)

\*٣- مجلات

\*٤- جرائد

\*٥- كمبيوتر

\*٦- فيديو

الرجاء التوضيح

...هناك بعض الكتب العامة والكتب الدراسية على الرف في غرفة المعيشة ، كما ان هناك بعض المجلات مثل مجلة "الرياضي" ومعظم الجرائد الرئيسية في الكويت. هناك ايضا كمبيوتر للاولاد وفيديو بحيث انهم يستطيعون مشاهدة الافلام التربوية والتي اعتقد انها ضرورية لتساعدهم على التحصيل العالي.....

١٧- هل ابنك (ابنتك) مشترك مع اشخاص آخرين في غرفة النوم؟

١- ينام مع اكثر من ٣ اشقاء او شقيقات

٢- ينام مع ٣ اشقاء او شقيقات

٣- ينام مع شقيق واحد او شقيقة

\*٤- ينام وحده

٥- ينام مع اشخاص آخرين

الرجاء التوضيح

...احمد ينام وحده في الغرفة وانا اعتقد بان ذلك سوف يساعده على اداء واجباته المدرسية في مكان هادىء.....

١٨- هل تشارك زوجتك (زوجك) في حل مشاكل ابنك (ابنتك) المدرسية؟

\*١- نعم



## APPENDIX C

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

...انا دائما اشارك زوجتي في حل مشاكل احمد خصوصا المشاكل الدراسية وهذا من اجل خلق جو من التعاون داخل الاسرة.....

١٩- هل زرت او زوجتك مدرسة ابنك (ابنتك) وتحدثت مع مدرسه او مدرستها السنة الماضية؟

\*١- نعم

٢- لا

للمذا الرجاء التوضيح

انا دائما ازور مدرسة احمد خلال السنة لآخذ فكرة عن اداء احمد ولاعطيها اي معلومات قد يحتاجونها عن احمد . انا اعتقد ان الزيارات مهمة جدا لتبادل الآراء بين المدرسة واولياء الامور لانها تساعد على التعاون ايضا بما يحقق بصراحة الجانب الايجابي للطالب وتحصيله.....

٢٠- هل تشعر بسهولة عندما تتكلم مع المدرسين؟

\*١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

...انا اشعر بسهولة عند التحدث الى المدرسين كما انني اشعر بتقبل لاسئلتني الخاصة باحمد.....

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٢١- هل تشعر بسهولة عندما تتكلم مع الاخصائي الاجتماعي؟

\*١- نعم

٢- لا

٣- بعض الاحيان

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

...أنا اشعر بسهولة عند التحدث معه لانني اعرف انه يريد مصلحة ابني وانه دائما يعمل على تحقيق الافضل للطلبة  
لتحسين مستواهم.....  
.....  
.....

٢٢- ما هو المستوى التعليمي الذي ترغب ان يحصل عليه ابنك (ابنتك)؟

١- الحصول على التعليم المتوسط فقط

٢- الحصول على التعليم الثانوي فقط

٣- الحصول على دبلوم من كلية معينة فقط

٤- الحصول على الدرجة الجامعية فقط

\*٥- الحصول على تعليم اعلى من الدرجة الجامعية

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

...لان هذا هو طموحي تجاه ابنائي.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

٢٣- ما الوظيفة التي ترغب ابنك (ابنتك) ان يتوجه اليها بعد انتهائه من الدراسة؟

...انا اتمنى ان يحصل احمد تحصيل عالي ويصبح طبيبا في المستقبل.....  
.....  
.....

٢٤- ما هو المستوى التعليمي الذي تعتقد حقا ان ابنك (ابنتك) يستطيع الحصول عليه؟

## APPENDIX C

- ١- الحصول على التعليم المتوسط فقط
- ٢- الحصول على التعليم الثانوي فقط
- ٣- الحصول على دبلوم من كلية معينة فقط
- ٤- الحصول على الدرجة الجامعية فقط
- \*٥- الحصول على تعليم اعلى من الدرجة الجامعية

لماذا الرجاء التوضيح

...لأنني اعتقد بانه يستطيع ان يحصل على هذه الدرجة و انا واثق من ذلك ايضا في حين اننا و امه نشجعه على ذلك ونحن متاكدين انه سوف يحصل على هذه الدرجة.....

.....

.....

٢٥- عدد الاخوة في الاسرة طبقا ل

| العمر      | النوع     | التعليم    |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| ١- ٢٢..... | ذكر.....  | جامعي..... |
| ٢- ٢٠..... | انثى..... | جامعي..... |
| ٣- .....   |           |            |
| ٤- .....   |           |            |
| ٥- .....   |           |            |
| ٦- .....   |           |            |
| ٧- .....   |           |            |
| ٨- .....   |           |            |
| ٩- .....   |           |            |
| ١٠- .....  |           |            |

٢٦- عمر الاب ..... ٥٠.....

٢٧- عمر الام ..... ٤٥.....

٢٨- دخل الاسرة الشهري ..... ١٤٠٠.....

## APPENDIX C

### ٢٩- الوضع الاجتماعي للأسرة

\*١- الأم والاب يعيشون في منزل واحد

٢- الأم والاب منفصلين

٣- الاب متزوج من امرأة أخرى

٣٠- ترتيب الطالب بين اخوانه...الثالث.....

٣١- معلومات تفصيلية عن المنزل.....نظام فيلا يحتوي على دورين واربع غرف نوم اي لكل فرد غرفة خاصة مع

توفر حديقة وتوفر مباني اضافية تحتوي على غرفة تستخدم للعباب الترفيه للأسرة.....

.....

## **APPENDIX (D)**

### **Interview (3,4) with the teachers and social specialists**

1- Do you think that socio-economic factors affect intermediate students' achievement in Kuwait?

Please explain

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2- According to your experience, what is the main socio-economic factors that may affect intermediate students' achievement in Kuwait?

Please explain

.....

.....

.....

.....

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• .....

3- How do you pinpointing low achieving pupils in class?

## **APPENDIX D**

**Please explain**

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**4- According to your experience, do you find enough time to observe low achievement students during the class?**

**Please explain**

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**5- What strategies (if any) do you use to deal with these children?**

**Please explain**

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## **APPENDIX D**

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**6- How do you communicate with parents?**

**Please explain**

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**7- What problems do you face in communicating with parents?**

**Please explain**

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**8- What are your suggestions to restrict students problems that result from socio-economic factors?**

**APPENDIX D**

**Please explain**

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## APPENDIX D

### مقابلة (٣) (٤)

مع المدرسين والإخصائيين الاجتماعيين

١- هل تعتقد ان العوامل الاجتماعية والاقتصادية تؤثر على التحصيل العلمي لطلبة المرحلة المتوسطة في الكويت ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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٢- من واقع خبراتك ، ما هي العوامل الاجتماعية والاقتصادية التي

قد تؤثر على التحصيل الدراسي لطالب المرحلة المتوسطة في الكويت ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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٣- كيف يمكنك التعرف على الطلبة ضعاف التحصيل في الفصل ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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٤- من واقع خبرتك ، هل تجد الوقت الكافى لملاحظة الطلبة ضعاف التحصيل خلال الحصص ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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٥- ما هدف الإستراتيجية أو الطريقة ( اذا كانت هناك طريقة ) التى تستخدمها مع الطلبة ضعاف التحصيل ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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٦- ما هى الطريقة التى تتبعها فى الإتصال مع أولياء الأمور ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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## APPENDIX D

٧- ما هي المشاكل التي تصادفك من اجراء الإتصال بأولياء الأمور ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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٨- ما هي مقترحاتك للحد من مشاكل الطلبة ضعيفي التحصيل الناتج عن

العوامل الإجتماعية والاقتصادية ؟

الرجاء التوضيح .....

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## APPENDIX E

### The Check list Used in the Pilot Study

| Presented question                                   | The student and the parent      | Comments |
|--|---------------------------------|----------|
| Parental marital status                              | The student:<br><br>The parent: |          |
| The relationship between the student and the parents | The student:<br><br>The parent: |          |
| The way in which the parents treated their children  | The student:<br><br>The parent: |          |
| Parents' supervision inside and outside the home     | The student:<br><br>The parent: |          |
| The contents of the home environment                 | The student:<br><br>The parent: |          |

**APPENDIX E****continued**

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| The activities inside the home   | The student:<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>The parent: |  |
| The relationship between the student and her/his siblings  | The student:<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>The parent: |  |
| The relationship between the student and her/his friends   | The student:<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>The parent: |  |
| The homework   | The student:<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>The parent: |  |
| The student's future aspirations and expectations<br>The parent's future aspirations and expectation for his/her child | The student:<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>The parent: |  |

**APPENDIX E****continued**

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>The relationship between the home and the school</b> | <b>The student:</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>The parent:</b> |  |
| <b>The student's hobbies</b>                            | <b>The student:</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>The parent:</b> |  |

## APPENDIX E

### ورقة المعلومات المستخدمة في الدراسة الاولى

| الملاحظات | الطلبة و اولياء الامور      | السؤال المطروح                        |
|-----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|           | الطالب :<br><br>ولي الامر : | الحالة الاجتماعية للوالدين            |
|           | الطالب :<br><br>ولي الامر : | طريقة معاملة اولياء الامور لاولادهم   |
|           | الطالب :<br><br>ولي الامر : | اشراف اولياء الامور داخل وخارج المنزل |

## APPENDIX E

تابع

|  |                                    |                                      |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|  | <p>الطالب :</p> <p>ولي الامر :</p> | <p>محتويات بيئة البيت</p>            |
|  | <p>الطالب :</p> <p>ولي الامر :</p> | <p>الانشطة داخل البيت</p>            |
|  | <p>الطالب :</p> <p>ولي الامر :</p> | <p>علاقة الطالب مع اخوته واخواته</p> |



# APPENDIX E

تابع

|  |                                    |  |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
|  | <p>الطالب :</p> <p>ولي الامر :</p> | <p>علاقة الطالب مع اصدقاءه</p>   |
|  | <p>الطالب :</p> <p>ولي الامر :</p> | <p>الواجب المدرسي</p>  |
|  | <p>الطالب :</p> <p>ولي الامر :</p> | <p>توقعات الطالب المستقبلية</p> <p>توقعات ولي الامر المستقبلية لابنه</p> |

## APPENDIX E

تابع

|  |             |                            |
|--|-------------|----------------------------|
|  | الطالب :    | هوايات الطالب              |
|  | ولي الامر : |                            |
|  | الطالب :    | العلاقة بين البيت والمدرسة |
|  | ولي الامر : |                            |

## APPENDIX F

### Multiple Regretion Analysis

**Table 1** Variables Entered on (Step Number 1) Occup1.

| Variables in the Equation     |            |                     |           |         |        |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Variable                      | B          | SE B                | Beta      | F       | Sig F  |
| Occup1                        | 44.763095  | 1.810417            | 0.710702  | 611.340 | 0.0000 |
| (Constant)                    | 234.623841 | 8.306229            | -----     | 797.878 | 0.0000 |
| Variables not in the Equation |            |                     |           |         |        |
| Variable                      | Beta In    | Partial Correlation | Min Toler | F       | Sig F  |
| Educ1                         | 0.051862   | 0.037991            | 0.265565  | 0.864   | 0.3529 |
| Educ2                         | 0.043596   | 0.044675            | 0.519695  | 1.196   | 0.2746 |
| Children                      | -0.057610  | 0.071503            | 0.762396  | 3.073   | 0.0801 |
| Income                        | 0.199466   | 0.230852            | 0.662897  | 33.663  | 0.0000 |
| Occup2                        | 0.028882   | 0.037327            | 0.826647  | 0.834   | 0.3614 |

Multiple R            0.71070  
R Square              0.50510  
Adjusted R Square    0.50427  
Standard Error        63.25198

F = 611.33993        Signif F = 0.0000

## APPENDIX F

**Table 2** Variables Entered on (Step Number 2) Income.

| Variables in the Equation     |            |            |           |         |        |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Variable                      | B          | SE B       | Beta      | F       | Sig F  |
| Occup1                        | 37.468795  | 2.165342   | 0.594891  | 299.424 | 0.0000 |
| Income                        | 0.036412   | 0.006276   | 0.199466  | 33.663  | 0.0000 |
| (Constant)                    | 233.565454 | 8.090681   | -----     | 833.388 | 0.0000 |
| Variables not in the Equation |            |            |           |         |        |
| Variable                      | Beta In    | Partial    | Min Toler | F       | Sig F  |
| Educ1                         | 0.01463    | 0.010936   | 0.247822  | 0.071   | 0.7894 |
| Educ2                         | 0.009035   | 0.009401   | 0.444270  | 0.053   | 0.8184 |
| Children                      | -0.065691  | 0.083720   | 0.538842  | 4.214   | 0.0405 |
| Occup2                        | - 0.008343 | - 0.010843 | 0.621354  | 0.070   | 0.7911 |

Multiple R            0.72902  
R Square              0.53147  
Adjusted R Square    0.52991  
Standard Error        61.59491

F = 339.16930            Signif F = 0.0000

## APPENDIX F

**Table 3** Variables Entered on (Step Number 3) Number of Children.

| Variables in the Equation     |            |            |           |         |        |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Variable                      | B          | SE B       | Beta      | F       | Sig F  |
| Occup1                        | 35.341714  | 2.395272   | 0.561119  | 217.704 | 0.0000 |
| Income                        | 0.036963   | 0.006265   | .202482   | 34.811  | 0.0000 |
| Children                      | -1.756662  | 0.855743   | 0.065691  | 4.214   | 0.0405 |
| (Constant)                    | 214.071707 | 12.461432  | ----      | 295.109 | 0.0000 |
| Variables not in the Equation |            |            |           |         |        |
| Variable                      | Beta In    | Partial    | Min Toler | F       | Sig F  |
| Educ1                         | - 0.012529 | - 0.009133 | 0.244885  | 0.050   | 0.8236 |
| Educ2                         | - 0.027030 | - 0.025922 | 0.427892  | 0.401   | 0.5269 |
| Occup2                        | - 0.023068 | - 0.029400 | 0.527817  | 0.516   | 0.4730 |

Multiple R            0.73127  
R Square            0.53476  
Adjusted R Square    0.53242  
Standard Error 61.43005

F = 228.73276            Signif F = 0.0000

## **APPENDIX G**

### **THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION THE ADMINISTRATION OF COORDINATION AND FOLLOWING THE GENERAL EDUCATION**

Dear The Manager of Educational areas

It is hoped to request the specialised departments to facilitate the mission of Mr.: Ali  
Jasem Al Shehab, a scholarship assistant professor in Education Foundation in  
Education College/ Kuwait University, in applying questionnaire on intermediate  
schools in your educational area boys/girls, which concerned with the Ph.D. of

( The Effect of Socio-Economic Factors on Educational  
Achievement of Children in Intermediate Schools)

and thank you for your help

The administrator of coordination and  
following the general education  
Dr. Nouriya Barrak Al Sobeah

## **APPENDIX G**

**KUWAIT UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**  
**Office of the Dean**

Dear under secretary of the Ministry of Education

It is hoped to get agreement and request for specialised statements to facilitate the mission of Mr. : Ali Jasem Al Shehab, a scholarship assistant professor in Education Foundation Department in College of Education, to visit five schools of each educational area by following the educational proccess line, especially of what concerned with his Ph.D.

thank you

The College Dean in proxy  
Dr. Abdulla Mohammed Al- Shaikh



وزارة التربية

ادارة تنسيق ومتابعة التعليم العام

التاريخ

الرقم : وت/أت ١٤ / ٥٠٢

السادة المحترمين / مديري المناطق التعليمية

تحية طيبة..

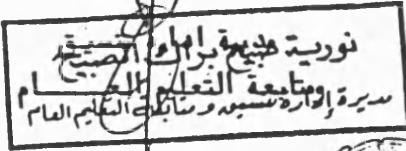
يرجى الايعاز بتسهيل مهمة السيد / علي جاسم شهاب معيد بعثة اصول التربية  
بكلية التربية/جامعة الكويت في تطبيق استبانة علي مدارس المرحلة المتوسطة بمنطقتكم التعليمية  
بنين/بنات ، والتي تتعلق بموضوع رسالة الدكتوراه بعنوان :

( اثر العوامل الاجتماعية والاقتصادية )

( علي التحصيل الدراسي في المرحلة المتوسطة في الكويت )

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم .

مع خالص التحية ،،،،



وزارة التربية  
ادارة تنسيق ومتابعة التعليم العام

نسخة للسيد / وكيلى وزارة التربية  
نسخة للسيد / عميد كلية التربية/جامعة الكويت  
نسخة / لصاحب العلاقات  
نسخة / للملف





﴿ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴾



KUWAIT UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Office of the Dean

معة الكويت

كلية التربية

مكتب العميد

رقم ١٩٠

السيد / وكيل وزارة التربية  
المحترم  
تحية طيبة وبعد،

يرجى التكرم بالموافقة والايعاز لجهات الاختصاص لديكم بتسهيل مهمة السيد / على جاسم شهاب معيد بعثه بقسم اصول التربية بالكلية فى زيارة ٥ مدارس من كل منطقة تعليمية وذلك للاطلاع عن كثب حول سير العملية التربوية وخاصة بالجوانب المتعلقة حول رسالة الدكتوراه .

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام

عميد الكلية بالوكالة

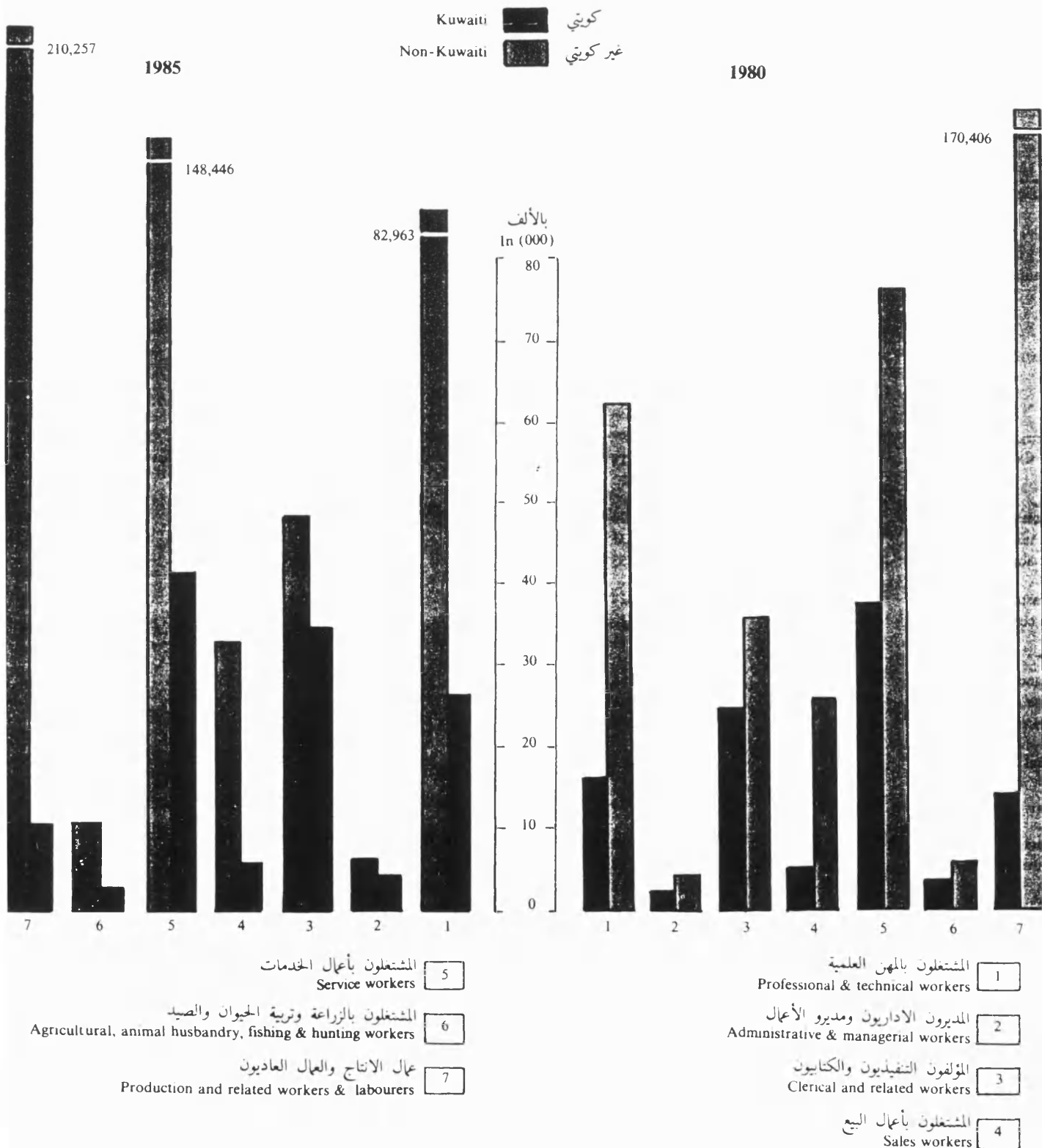
د. عبدالله محمد الشيخ

## APPENDIX H

Labour Force (15 years & over) by  
Division of Occupation & Nationality

قوة العمل (15 سنة فأكثر)  
حسب اقسام المهنة والجنسية

Census 1985-1980 تعداد



## APPENDIX I

| Area         | Number of intermediate schools | Number of students in intermediate schools (Kuwaiti only) |         |        | No. of the third Grade students (Kuwaiti only) |         |        |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---|---------|--------|--|---------|--------|
|              |                                | Males   | Females | Total  | Males  | Females | Total  |
| Al-Assemah   | 25                             | 4,764   | 4,439   | 9,203  | 1,133  | 978     | 2,111  |
| Hawali       | 35                             | 9,278   | 9,070   | 18,348 | 2,234  | 2,245   | 4,479  |
| Al-Farwaniya | 25                             | 8,608   | 8,427   | 17,035 | 1,978  | 1,984   | 3,962  |
| Al-Ahmadi    | 37                             | 8,534   | 8,240   | 16,774 | 1,915  | 2,031   | 3,946  |
| Al-Jahra     | 26                             | 4,390   | 4,212   | 8,602  | 1,034  | 1,030   | 2,064  |
| Total        | 148                            | 35,574  | 34,388  | 69,962 | 8,294  | 8,268   | 16,562 |

**Table 1: The Number of Schools and Pupils in Kuwait Intermediate Schools in Five Governorates.**

Source: 1- Ministry of Planning, (1992), Annual Statistical Abstract, 29, p. 326, Kuwait

| Value Label          | Value | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cum Percent |
|----------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|-------------|
| Hala Bent Kheweild   | 1     | 30        | 5.0     | 5.0           | 5.0         |
| Om Maabed            | 2     | 29        | 4.8     | 4.8           | 9.8         |
| Almegdad Ben Alaswad | 3     | 30        | 5.0     | 5.0           | 14.8        |
| Alwaha               | 4     | 24        | 4.0     | 4.0           | 18.8        |
| Subaiaa Bent Alharet | 5     | 38        | 6.3     | 6.3           | 25.1        |
| Omaih Bent Gaith     | 6     | 29        | 4.8     | 4.8           | 30.0        |
| Abo Almehsen Babetai | 7     | 27        | 4.5     | 4.5           | 34.4        |
| Mubarak Ajaber       | 8     | 29        | 4.8     | 4.8           | 39.3        |
| Ammar Ben Yaser      | 9     | 32        | 5.3     | 5.3           | 44.6        |
| Shamlan Ben Ali      | 10    | 27        | 4.5     | 4.5           | 49.1        |
| Alshaima Bent Alhare | 11    | 33        | 5.5     | 5.5           | 54.6        |
| Rugaith              | 12    | 31        | 5.2     | 5.2           | 59.7        |
| Abo Almehsen Alkhura | 13    | 31        | 5.2     | 5.2           | 64.9        |
| Mashaan Alkhdir      | 14    | 34        | 5.7     | 5.7           | 70.5        |
| Mushref              | 15    | 33        | 5.0     | 5.0           | 75.5        |
| Baian                | 16    | 31        | 5.2     | 5.2           | 80.7        |
| Om Atiah             | 17    | 26        | 4.7     | 4.7           | 85.4        |
| Khawalh              | 18    | 25        | 4.2     | 4.2           | 89.5        |
| Maen Ben Zaedah      | 19    | 35        | 5.8     | 5.8           | 95.3        |
| Alshuwaik            | 20    | 26        | 4.7     | 4.7           | 100.0       |
| Total:               |       | 601       | 100.0   | 100.0         | ---         |

**Table 2 Number of Schools used in Research**

## APPENDIX I

| Value Label | Value | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cum Percent |
|-------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|-------------|
| Male        | 1     | 297       | 49.4    | 49.4          | 49.4        |
| Female      | 2     | 304       | 50.6    | 50.6          | 100.0       |
| Total:      |       | 601       | 100.0   | 100.0         | ---         |

Valid cases = 601

Missing cases = 0

**Table 3 Number of Students (boys and girls) in the Main Sample**

| Value Label | Value | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cum Percent |
|-------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|-------------|
| Asma        | 1     | 116       | 19.3    | 19.3          | 19.3        |
| Hawalli     | 2     | 126       | 21.0    | 21.0          | 40.3        |
| Farwania    | 3     | 123       | 20.5    | 20.5          | 60.7        |
| Ahmidi      | 4     | 123       | 20.5    | 20.5          | 81.2        |
| Jahra       | 5     | 113       | 18.8    | 18.8          | 100.0       |
| Total:      |       | 601       | 100.0   | 100.0         | ---         |

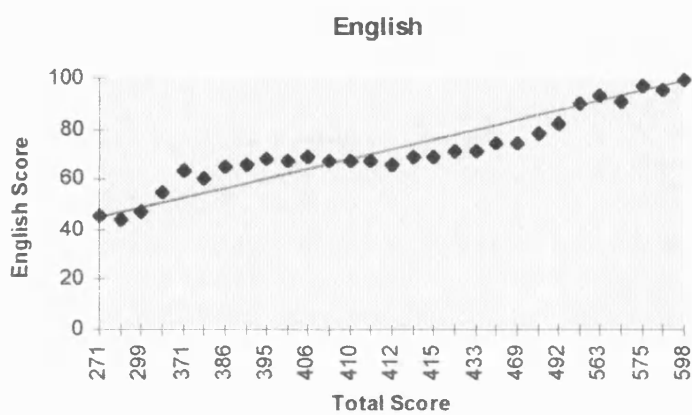
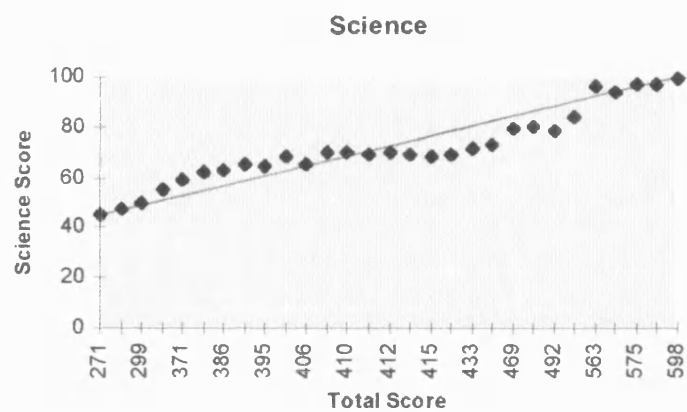
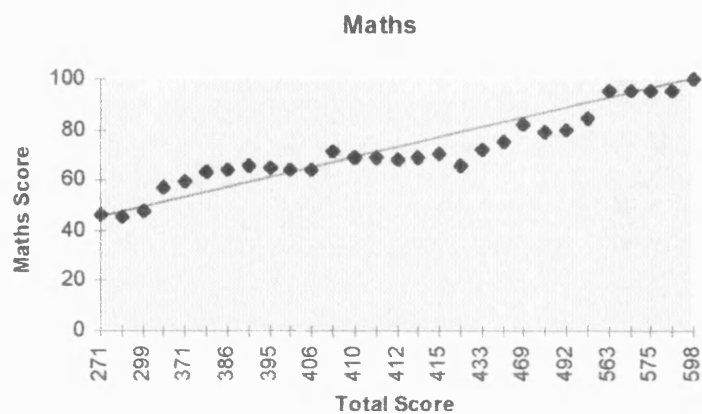
Valid cases = 601

Missing cases = 0

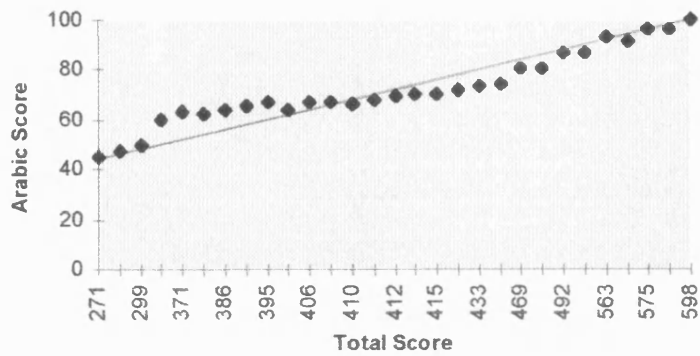
**Table 4 The students (boys and girls) Distribution on the Main Five Governorates**

## APPENDIX J Graphs of each individual subject marks against final grade

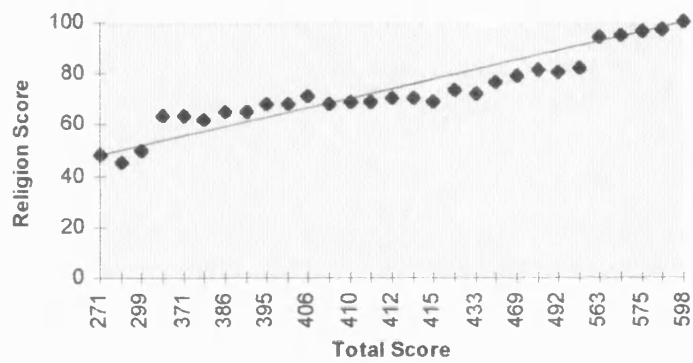
### School 1



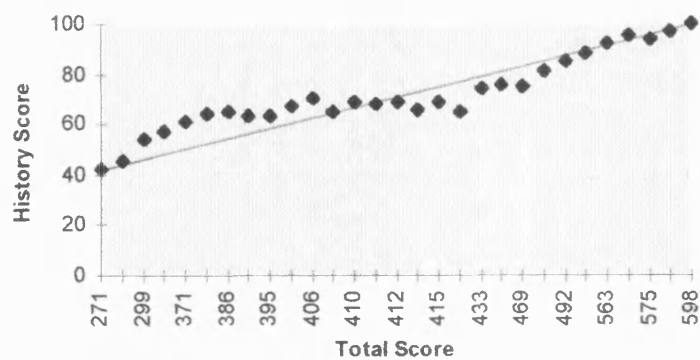
Arabic



Religion

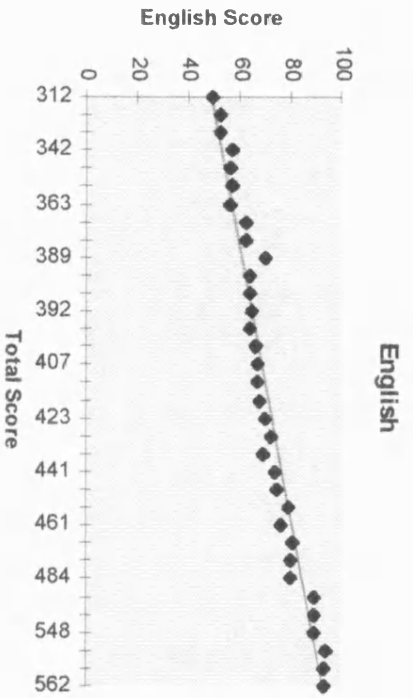
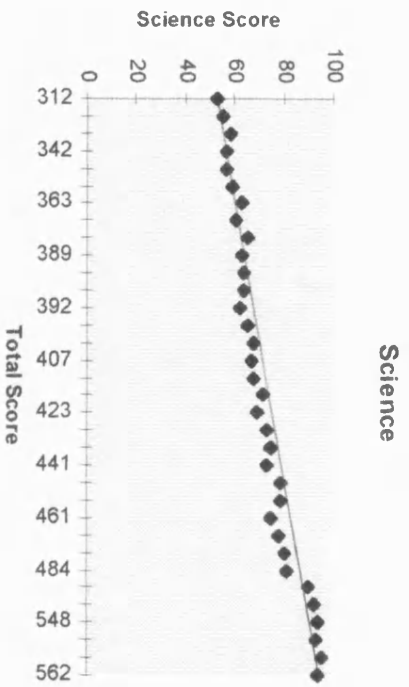
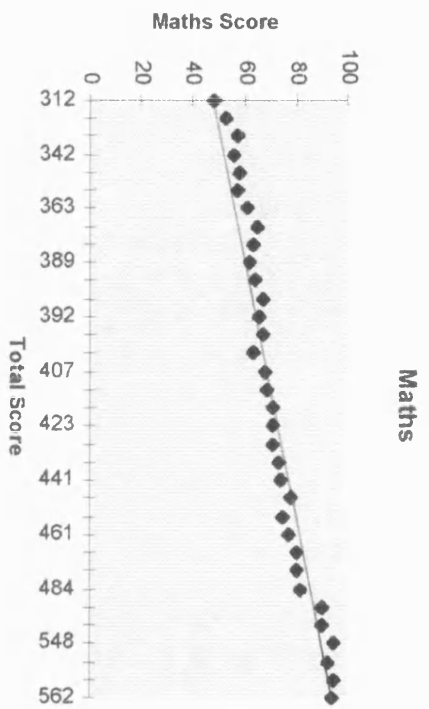


History



## APPENDIX J

### School 2



## APPENDIX J

## School 2 continued

